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THE CHRISTIAN AND CIVIC ECONOMY OF LARGE TOWNS

THE CHRISTIAN AND CIVIC ECONOMY OF LARGE TOWNS

BY

THOMAS CHALMERS, D.D., LL.D.

ABRIDGED AND WITH AN INTRODUCTION BY

CHARLES R. HENDERSON

PROFESSOR OF SOCIOLOGY, UNIVERSITY OF CHICAGO

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PREFATORY NOTE OF THE EDITOR

In the collection and examination of the materials and references for the Introduction, especially in relation to the Scottish Poor Law, I wish to gratefully acknowledge the kind help of Rev. W. C. MacNaul, D.B., Mr. Hew Morrison, of the Edinburgh Public Library, and of A. W. Smith, Esq., Edinburgh.

In regard to the treatment of the text of "The Christian and Civic Economy of Large Towns" it should be said, that the body of the book is copied carefully from a text printed at Glasgow by William Collins; that the text is simply a reproduction of the exact words of that edition; that omissions due to the frequent repetitions of the author or to merely local and transitory interest are indicated; that no important idea is omitted, but only illustrations; that the bracketed additions are designed to indicate the transitional thoughts or to explain some point which might otherwise be left in obscurity.

The material presented in the Introduction is intended to be a criticism of the obsolete doctrines of the author and an appreciation of those teachings which have contemporary interest. If the reader prefers to agree with the author rather than with the editor, he will do so at least upon information and consideration of a different standpoint.

C. R. H.

INTRODUCTION TO THE CHRISTIAN AND CIVIC ECONOMY OF LARGE TOWNS

I

BIOGRAPHICAL

THOMAS CHALMERS was born March 17, 1780, and died May 30, 1847. His public life covered nearly all of the first half of the nineteenth century. At the age of eleven years we find him at the University of St. Andrews. During this period he gave most of his attention to mathematics. Later (1799-1800) he attended lectures at Edinburgh under Stewart, Playfair, Robison, and Hope. His ordination occurred in 1803, and his first pastoral service was in the rural parish of Kilmany. He taught mathematics to enthusiastic classes during the week and preached on Sundays. At one time he gave popular lectures on chemistry. He aspired to a chair as teacher of mathematics at Edinburgh (1805), but failed in this ambition. His early interest in economic and political problems is evidenced by the publication (1808) of an "Enquiry into the Extent and Stability of National Resources."

Bereavement and personal illness turned his thoughts into new channels and deepened his spiritual insight. His article on Christianity, published in the " Edinburgh Encyclopædia," marks a stage in his personal development. His preaching became more evangelical, powerful, and earnest. In 1815 he was elected by the Town Council of Glasgow, by a bare majority, and after intense opposition on the part of certain politicians and ecclesiastics, as pastor of Tron church and parish, and he at once became popular as a preacher. The antagonism shown to him at the time of his election, and the political hindrances thrown in his way by civil officers opened his eyes to the evils of an ecclesiastical establishment; but it required the bitter experiences of many more years to cause him to break the fetters which galled him and impeded his labors.

His intense evangelical spirit and his conscientious devotion to pastoral service did not choke his abiding interest in natural science. While he toiled among the poor and depraved, he kept in touch with university men and their intellectual interests. In 1817 he gave to the world his famous " Astronomical Discourses."

He was transferred to the parish of St. John's in 1819, and during his ministry there he published a series of articles which came to form a book entitled " The Christian and Civic Economy of Large Towns." This book, not completed until 1826, is republished in this volume in a condensed form.

In 1823 Chalmers returned to academic life as professor of moral philosophy in the University of St. An-

drews. While he occupied this office he published (1827) his treatise on "The Use and Abuse of Literary and Ecclesiastical Endowments." While he was still at St. Andrews he began a series of lectures to students and pastors on economic subjects which were afterwards (1832) published under the title "Political Economy."

He was appointed professor of theology at Edinburgh in 1828. In 1833 he published one of the Bridgewater treatises "On the Adaptation of External Nature to the Moral and Intellectual Constitution of Man."

The organizing and administrative ability of the man was already well known, and in the years 1834-1841 he led, with persuasive and commanding eloquence, the movement which issued in adding to the resources of the state church £300,000 and 220 new edifices.

For many years Chalmers had felt the pressure of political interference with the appointment of pastors and the conduct of parishes. All this time he had loyally defended the Establishment, had believed that it could be made a means of spiritual blessing to Scotland, and that its defects could be remedied by reforms within the body. But at last he came to the conviction that the struggle to secure an earnest ministry by political appointment cost too much effort and contest. He had also learned that the voluntary liberality of earnest faith may be counted on to give generous resources for the support of a faithful ministry. Even while he was yet a prominent figure in the state church he had shown a liberal and courteous spirit toward dissenters, and at one time went so far as to take a pew for his family in a

chapel at St. Andrews, where a simple and pure gospel was preached and taught. At last Chalmers found the yoke of legal authority too heavy for him, and, on a memorable day, May 18, 1843, in company with four hundred and seventy other clergymen, he withdrew from the church of his fathers and of his beloved country, and they formed the Free Church of Scotland. In the General Assembly of this body Dr. Chalmers became the first moderator. He planned and worked, with great success, for the raising of a fund to support and promote the work of this denomination, whose first ministers gave up manses and church edifices, and all the material advantages of their former connection with the state, for the sake of a principle.

From the books cited below, and especially those of Hanna and Blaikie, this bare outline may be filled out. Enough has been here set down to indicate the honors and the confidence shown to him by his contemporaries, and to suggest the value of his deliberate expression of convictions and the reasons on which they were based.

One of the latest undertakings of Chalmers was so characteristic that a brief statement of the famous enterprise may be useful at this point. When age had begun to tell on his strength, and he was full of the cares of a professorship, he sought to demonstrate once more the value of the social theory of his life-work. July 26, 1844, fourteen months after the great Disruption, he wrote to Mr. Lenox, of New York, founder of Lenox Library: "I have determined to assume a poor district of 2,000 people and superintend it myself, though

it be a work greatly too much for my declining strength and means. Yet such do I hold to be the efficiency of the method with the divine blessing that, perhaps, as the concluding act of my public life, I shall make the effort to exemplify what as yet I have only expounded."

He would make that work simply Christian and human, not sectarian. "Who cares about the Free Church compared with the Christian good of Scotland? Who cares about any church but as an instrument of Christian good? For be assured that the moral and religious well-being of the population is of infinitely higher importance than the advancement of any sect."

Of this West-Port (Edinburgh) experiment Dr. Blaikie says: "The district selected was of the worst description —a fourth part of the population being paupers, and another fourth street beggars, thieves, and prostitutes. The population amounted to upward of 400 families, of whom 300 had no connection with any church. Of 411 children of school age, 290 were growing up without any education.

"The plan of Dr. Chalmers was to divide the whole territory into twenty districts, containing each about twenty families. To each district a visitor was appointed, whose duty was to visit each family once a week, under directions printed by Dr. Chalmers to show the specific object of the visitation. A school was provided, and the visitors were instructed, in the first instance, to show an active interest in the young, and exhort their parents to send their children to the school. A small fee was exacted, on the principle that what was paid for would

be more valued, and that a more regular attendance would be secured. The visitors were instructed to meet with Dr. Chalmers every Saturday evening, the first meeting to take place in July, 1844."

Public worship was opened in a tan-loft. In 1845 Rev. W. Tasker was secured as a missionary minister. A library, a savings bank, a washing-house, and a female industrial school were added to the parochial equipments. The church came to number 1,300 communicants. It has often been imitated. The "institutional" churches have copied many features, and social settlements have received suggestive impulses from the same source. The territorial principle lies at the basis of the parish work. The district visitor and the scheme of co-operation are factors in the Elberfeld system of German municipal poor relief, of the Charity Organization Society in Great Britain and America, of the Federation of Churches, and of the earlier experiments of the Evangelical Alliance in the United States.

These enterprises of Chalmers attracted the attention and won the admiration of Carlyle, who said: "What a wonderful old man Chalmers is! or, rather, he has all the buoyancy of youth. When so many of us are wringing our hands in hopeless despair over the vileness and wretchedness of the large towns, there goes the old man, shovel in hand, down into the dirtiest puddles of the West-Port of Edinburgh, cleans them out, and fills the sewers with living waters. It is a beautiful sight."

BIBLIOGRAPHY

A few selected titles are given here for those who wish to learn more of the life and work of our author. Further references will be found in the book of Professor Blaikie.

Memoirs of the Life and Writings of Thomas Chalmers. By W. Hanna.

Thomas Chalmers. By W. G. Blaikie. New York, 1897.

Zwei Bücher zur socialen Geschichte Englands. By A. Held. Leipzig, 1881. S. 233.

II

ANALYSIS OF THE CHRISTIAN AND CIVIC ECONOMY OF LARGE TOWNS AND OF THE POLITICAL ECONOMY

THE CHRISTIAN AND CIVIC ECONOMY OF LARGE TOWNS

THE theme of this work touches the essence of Chalmers' own life: the social welfare of the laboring classes; the obstacles to that welfare; the means of promoting it.

Chapter I.—Religion and science should be united in the service of man.—Institutions are important to happiness and character. The country parishes of Scotland present certain advantages and produce a worthy type of character. The city parish may be so organized as to secure these advantages. We must provide for a numerous and well-appointed agency. The power of personal influence must be felt. Ministers of the church should be free from the excessive burdens of varied secular offices that they may have time and energy for their specific, intellectual, and practical duties.

Chapter II.—On the influence of locality in towns.—Most philanthropic societies err in seeking to cover a whole city by one scheme. It were better for an association to attack a small area and till it thoroughly. If

a successful and fruitful plan has demonstrated its value in a limited district it will be imitated, and at last the entire city will be covered.

Chapter III.—Application of the principle of locality to the work of a Christian minister.—An argument for a state church based on the ground that people need but do not desire religion and education. Material goods they do desire and will voluntarily seek. The church policy of emanation is superior to the passive policy of attraction.

Chapter IV.—The effect of locality in adding to the useful establishments of a town, and especially in respect to schools for the laboring classes.—Gifts for popular education are the best form of charity.

Chapters V. and VI.—On church patronage.—The popular religious taste for evangelical doctrine is sound, and should be regarded by those persons who have legal power to appoint pastors. The competition of sects is not altogether an evil. Dissenters should be treated with tolerance, since they spur the Established Church to its duty. Germs of the social settlement idea are found here.

Chapter VII.—On church offices.—The organization of Scottish churches. Objections to a fund for the poor. The modern idea of friendly visitors finely treated.

Chapter VIII.—On Sabbath schools.—Their function and relation to family and church. The social settlement idea again.

Chapter IX.—On the relation between the Christian and the civic economy of large towns.—The same relig-

ious ministrations which Christianize and spiritualize a few do more obviously and on a wide scale refine and civilize.

Chapter X.—On the bearing which a right Christian economy has upon pauperism.—Objections to out-door official relief, by church or state: chiefly because it tends to suppress the graces and virtues.

Chapter XI.—On the bearing which a right civic economy has upon pauperism.—Criticism of centralized administration of relief. Plea for a close neighborhood bond between almoner and people. St. John's parish experiment.

Chapter XII.—On the present state and future prospects of pauperism in Glasgow.—The idea of the more recent Charity Organization Society and its fundamental principles.

Chapter XIII.—On the difficulties and evils which adhere even to the best condition of Scottish pauperism. —Illustrations from the "Gorbals" at Glasgow.

Chapter XIV.—On the likeliest means for the abolition of pauperism (that is, out-door official relief) in England.—Evils of the English Poor Law. Out-door official relief is both unnecessary and hurtful. Mitigation of its evils not possible. Gradual abolition the only remedy.

Chapter XV.—On the likeliest parliamentary means for the abolition of pauperism in England.—Law should simply permit localities to try the experiment of abolition. A form of referendum recommended.

Chapter XVI.—On the likeliest parochial means for the abolition of pauperism in England.—Practically,

Charity Organization Society methods in parishes which had voted for abolition.

Chapter XVII.—On the wages of labor.—We pass at this point from the consideration of paupers to the economic conditions of the wage-earning class. Adopting the "wage fund theory" of his day, the author traces a clear mathematical ratio between the supply of laborers and the demand for them. Accepting the doctrine of Malthus, he teaches that a small surplus of laborers will produce a great fall in wages; and that a small deficiency in the supply of laborers will cause a considerable rise in wages. Hence the "lower classes" can control the rate of wages by marrying later and having smaller families.

Chapter XVIII.—On the effect of a poor rate, when applied in aid of defective wages.—It increases the number of the dependent, encourages early marriages, and induces idleness, vice, and revolt.

Chapter XIX.—On savings banks.—A fund in hand enables the workmen to hold out for better wages.

Chapters XX. and XXI.—On the combinations of workmen for the purpose of raising wages.—His doctrine of the wage fund led Chalmers to believe that combinations cannot affect the rate of wages. But he deprecated the legal suppression of trades-unions. Non-union men must be protected by police if they choose to work for wages offered.

Chapter XXII.—On certain prevalent errors which are fostered by economic theories.—There is no danger that combinations of laborers will too greatly reduce the sup-

ply of labor or drive capital from the country. Economic forces are too strong for artificial unions.

Chapter XXIII.—On the effect which the high price of labor in a country has upon its foreign trade.—Theory of international trade. No real manufacturing or commercial interest will suffer because workmen are well paid.

Chapter XXIV.—On mechanic schools, and on political economy as a branch of education.—Popular education, especially in economics, tends to pacify rather than to excite working people. When they see that strikes do no good they will seek other means of bettering their condition. They will act on the advice of Malthus and limit their numbers in order to raise their wages.

Professor Blaikie sums up the social teaching of Chalmers in these words: "On the basis of the gospel, he could not separate the social from the personal, the general from the particular, the temporal from the spiritual. He had always an Arcadia, a Utopia, a new spring-tide of his country in his vista; but a spring-tide to be realized in one way only—by the coming of the spirit from on high."

POLITICAL ECONOMY

Before offering criticisms and estimates of the social teachings of the volume here presented, it will be well to consider the system of economic thought which grew up in the mind of Chalmers. Fortunately, we have a synopsis of this system in the very words of our author.

It is found in his work on "Political Economy," published in 1832:

"It has not been our object to deliver a regular system of political economy. It has been to establish the following specific proposition: That no economic enlargements in the wealth and resources of a country can ensure aught like a permanent comfort or sufficiency to the families of a land. Followed up as these enlargements are by a commensurate, or generally by an over-passing, increase of the population, the country, while becoming richer in the aggregate, may continue to teem with as great, perhaps a greater, amount of individual distress and penury than in the humble and earlier days of her history. In these circumstances the highway to our secure and stable prosperity is not so much to enlarge the limit of our external means as so to restrain the numbers of the population that they shall not press too hard upon that limit. But the only way of rightly accomplishing this is through the medium of a higher self-respect and higher taste for the comforts and decencies of life among the people themselves. It is only a moral and voluntary restraint that should be aimed at, or that can be at all effectual—the fruit, not of any external or authoritative compulsion, but of their own spontaneous and collective will. This is evidently not the achievement of a day, but the slow product of education, working insensibly, yet withal steadily and surely, on the habits and inclinations of the common people; begetting a higher cast of character, and, as the unfailing consequence of this, a higher standard of enjoyment; the effect of which will

be more provident, and hence both later and fewer, marriages. Without this expedient no possible enlargement of the general wealth can enlarge the individual comfort of families; but, as in China, we shall behold a general want and wretchedness throughout the mass of society. With this expedient, no limitation in the way of further increase to our wealth will depress the condition, though it will restrain the number of our families; but, as in Norway, we shall behold the cheerful spectacle of a thriving, independent, and respectable peasantry."

The leading principles of the economic theory are thus stated:

1. The division of the laboring population into the agricultural, the secondary, and the disposable. . . . No ground will be cultivated (unless by the interference of some artificial and compulsory legislation) that is not at least able to feed the agricultural population employed on it, and their secondaries. Hence the higher the standard of enjoyment is among the people at large, the greater will be the secondary, and the less will be the disposable class; or, corresponding to this, the greater will be the wages, and the less will be the rent, while, at the same time, the more limited will be the cultivation, because of the larger produce that will be required from the soil last entered on, to feed the larger number of secondaries.

2. That the great aim of every enlightened philanthropist and patriot is to raise the standard of enjoyment, even though it should somewhat lessen the rent and somewhat limit the cultivation.

3. That there is no other method by which wages can

be kept permanently high than by the operation of the moral preventive check among the working classes of society; and that this can only be secured by elevating their standard of enjoyment, through the means both of common and Christian education.

4. That however menacing the aspect of a policy whose object is to raise the condition of the working classes may have on the interest of the landlords, by encroaching on the rent of land, yet they have a security for a great and growing revenue notwithstanding. Such, in the first place, is the strength of the principle of population, that there is no danger but wages will be kept sufficiently low, and cultivation be carried down among the inferior soils sufficiently far. And besides, every improvement in the methods of husbandry, by lessening the agricultural population needed for the work of farms—and every improvement in the powers of manufacturing industry, by lessening the population needed for preparing the second necessaries of life—will serve to increase the disposable population who are at the service of the landlords, and, along with this, the rent out of which this third class of laborers is maintained. The improvements which are ever taking place in the powers of labor will greatly more than countervail any diminution effected by the moral check on the number of laborers.

5. That high wages are not necessarily confined to the period when the wealth of society is in a state of progressive increase; and neither does it follow that, when this wealth has attained its maximum, and become stationary, the wages of labor must be low. That it remains

in the collective power of laborers to sustain their wages at as high a level in the ultimate as in the progressive stages of the wealth of a country. That the moral preventive check on population can achieve and perpetuate this result; but nothing else will do it.

6. That in every country, where the laws are efficient and equitable, and the people are industrious, the cultivation of the soil will, under the guidance of personal interest and enterprise, be carried to the extreme limit of its being profitable.

7. That this contemplation suggests two distinct limits —one, the extreme limit of a profitable, another the extreme limit of a possible, cultivation. That, by abstaining from schemes of pauperism, and, instead of these, giving the whole strength and wisdom of government to the best schemes of popular education, we shall keep within the former limit; and, with an untouched disposable population, whether for the luxury of proprietors, or for the public objects of a sound and enlightened patriotism, we may have, at the same time, the general population in a state of respectable comfort and sufficiency. But if, transgressing the former limit, we enter, with our home colonists, on unprofitable soils, and so make way to the latter limit—from that moment, in thus making room for a larger, we are on the sure road to a greatly more wretched society than before.

8. That no trade or manufacture contributes more to the good of society than the use or enjoyment which is afforded by its own commodities; hence the delusiveness of that importance which has been ascribed to them, as

if they bore any creative part in augmenting the public revenue, or as if, apart from the use of their commodities, they at all contributed to the strength or greatness of the nation; and hence, also, the futility of the common distinction between productive and unproductive labor.

9. We are not to imagine, though any given branch of trade or manufacture should be extinguished, that it will sensibly throw back agriculture.

10. There is a misplaced and exaggerated alarm connected with the decay and loss of trade.

11. They are chiefly the holders of the first necessaries of life, or landed proprietors, who impress, by their taste and demand, any direction which seemeth unto them good, on the labors of the disposable population.

12. Grant but industry and protection, and their capital will be found to have in it as great an increasing and restorative power as population has.

13. That the diminution of capital, occasioned by excessive expenditure, whether public or private, is not repaired so much by parsimony as by the action of a diminished capital on profits; and that the extravagance of government or of individuals, which raises prices by the amount of that extravagance, produces only a rotation of property, without any further diminution of it than what arises from the somewhat higher rate of profit which an increased expenditure brings along with it; and which higher rate of profit must, to a certain extent, limit the cultivation of land.

14. That trade is liable to gluts, both general and partial; that no skilful distribution of the capital among

particular trades can save the losses which ensue from a general excess of trading; and that the result is the same whether the undue extension has taken place by means of credit or from an excess of capital.

15. That the rate of profit is determined by the collective will of capitalists, just as the rate of wages is by the collective will of laborers—the former, by the command which they have, through their greater or less expenditure, over the amount of capital; the latter by the command which they have, through their later or earlier marriages, over the amount of population. That by raising or lowering, therefore, the standard of enjoyment among capitalists, profit is raised or lowered; that in this way both classes may encroach on the rent of land and share its produce more equally with the landlords.

16. That when the agricultural produce of a country is equal to the subsistence of its population, its foreign trade is as much directed by the taste and upheld by the ability of its landed proprietors as the home trade is.

17. That it is not desirable that the commerce of Britain should greatly overlap its agricultural basis, and that the excrescent population, subsisted on corn from abroad, yields a very insignificant fraction to the public revenue.

18. That, nevertheless, there should be a gradual relaxation of the corn laws, and ultimately a free corn trade—with the exception of a small duty on importation, for the single purpose of a revenue to government, by which to meet the expenses to which it is subjected, from the addition made by the excrescent to the whole population.

19. That the abolition of this monopoly in corn would

not be injurious to the British landlords, seeing that the increase thereby given to the value of money might create an inequality between them and the fund-holders, which inequality, however, could be rectified by means of an adjusted taxation.

20. That probably a free corn trade would not burden the country with a large excrescent population.

21. That Britain has little or nothing to apprehend from the loss of her colonies and commerce; but that change of employment to the disposable population, and enjoyment to their maintainers, would form the whole result of it. And that, though, historically, foreign trade did, at the termination of the middle ages, stimulate agriculture, yet that now, under all the possible fluctuations of trade, there is perfect security for the cultivation of land, on that point at which it ceases to yield any surplus produce to the landlord.

22. That, with the exception of their first brief and temporary effect on wages and the profits of circulating capital, and of their more prolonged effect on the profits of fixed capital, all taxes fall upon land, the interest of its mortgages being included.

23. That this doctrine, though now regarded as one of the exploded errors of the French economists, should not share in the discredit attached to their school, if upheld by other reasonings, and made to rest on other principles than those of the economists. That the grounds on which our convictions in this matter are established were never once recognized by these economists—that is, the dependence of wages on an element over which la-

borers, collectively, have the entire control, we mean population; and the dependence of profit on an element over which traders, collectively, have the entire control, we mean the capital.

24. That, to estimate the whole effect of taxes upon land, we should add to the effect of them, in aggravating the expenditure of landlords, the effect of them in lessening the receipts. That every tax which bears on the profit or maintenance of the agricultural capitalists, and which bears on the wages or maintenance of the agricultural and their secondary laborers, and, generally, which enhances the expenses of farm management, creates a reduction *pro tanto*, from the rent. That, for the commutation of all taxes in a territorial and funded impost, there would be a full equivalent to the landlords; first, in the lessened expenses of their living, and secondly, in the enlarged rent of all the land now under cultivation. And that they, over and above, would obtain more than an equivalent in the new rent which would accrue from the more extended cultivation of their land, now unburdened of all those taxes by which the cultivation had formerly been limited.

25. That the effect of tithes, in contracting the agriculture of a country, is the same with that of taxes on capitalists, or laborers, or the instruments of husbandry; and that the abolition of both would, in the first instance, enlarge the comforts of the general community, but, at least, would prove exclusively a boon and an enlargement to the landlords.

26. That tithes and taxes ought not to be abolished, but

commuted, as there ought to be a more liberal provision for various branches of the public service, and more especially for the support of the literary and ecclesiastical establishments, the endowment of which is indispensable to high scholarship and to the full Christian instruction of the people.

27. That the extreme limit of taxation is the landed rental of the kingdom; and that, were taxation carried to this limit, it would place the great bulk of the disposable population in the service of the state.

28. That the capabilities of the nation for defensive war are greatly underrated, they being at least commensurate to the extent of the disposable population.

29. That the superior influence of Britain over other nations in distant parts is due to her exports; and that if, instead of her lighter manufactures, she had to export raw produce, her power in offensive war would be lessened, while she might continue as strong in defensive war as before; and that, therefore, the balance of power is a topic of needless and misplaced anxiety on the part of British statesmen.

30. That the national debt is tantamount to a general mortgage on the land of the kingdom, and that it has occasioned no diminution of capital, the absorption of capital by the government loan of any particular year being replaced next year by the operation of the diminished capital upon profits.

31. That if the expenses of a war are raised within the year, they do not enhance general prices; but that, in as far as they are defrayed by loans, prices rise, and so

that the excess upon the whole is equal to the sum borrowed.

32. That the national debt is therefore a double burden upon the community, having already been paid once in the excess of those higher prices which are consequent upon each loan, and to be paid a second time, either by a perpetual interest or by the liquidation of the principal.

33. That the nation is able to pay the expense of any war by taxes within the year, as by taxes and loans together, seeing that, in point of fact, it does pay the loans within the year, too, in the higher prices which these loans have occasioned.

34. That the law of primogeniture is essentially linked with the political strength and other great interests of the nation.

35. That, on the whole, no enlargement of our economical resources will suffice for the wants of a population who are under no moral or prudential restraint on the increase of their numbers. That the effect of each successive addition to the means of our subsistence will, in that case, be only a larger, but not more comfortable or better conditioned, society. That, however numerous or however successful the expedients may be for adding to the amount of national wealth, they will be nullified, in point of effect on the sensible comfort of families, by the operation of but one expedient more, which shall ensure a proportional, or beget a tendency toward a greater than proportional, addition to the national population. That a law of compulsory relief for the poor is precisely such an expedient, and that, so long as it is in operation, every

other device which philanthropy can suggest, or even an enlightened political economy can sanction, will turn out to be futile and abortive.

36. That, but for this disturbing force, which so unsettles the prudential habits of the people and so undermines every principle, whether of nature or of Christianity, to the spontaneous operation of which the care of the poor ought always to have been confided, society might undergo a very speedy amelioration. Because that a very small excess in the number of laborers effects a very large and disproportionate reduction in the price of labor, and therefore, by a reverse process, it might only require a very insignificant fraction of relief from the numbers of the people to operate a very large relief on their circumstances and comforts. That emigration for the lessening of the number, and the various other economical expedients for the enlargement of the means, will be of but slight or temporary effect so long as the law of pauperism shall maintain the population in a state of perpetual overflow. But that, if these were related to a scheme for the gradual abolition of the pauperism, they would smooth the transition from a system of compulsory to one of natural and gratuitous relief; after which it were in the power of common, and more especially of Christian, education, indefinitely to raise the habits and tastes, and, along with these, to raise the economical condition of the people.

III

CRITICISM OF CERTAIN SOCIAL TEACHINGS OF CHALMERS

More than half a century has passed since the great man of faith, wisdom, and good works passed away from earth. During the intervening time the civilized world has been urged forward upon a path which the wisest philosopher could not foresee and foretell. A science is the explanation of a system of facts, and the facts have changed. By a division of mental labor and a process of critical discussion, the economists have sifted good grain from the chaff of error. We may believe that if Dr. Chalmers could have lived to our day and followed the course of experience and academic discussion, he would issue a new edition of his "Christian and Civic Economy of Large Towns," and he would have made it shorter, out of respect for the more rapid movement of our age. He might justly still claim that the fundamental principles of his work are valid. Some of his theoretical positions and practical recommendations he would modify.

In the body of the text of this edition of his work his very words remain undisturbed. But the reader should not permit himself to be carried along with the torrent of eager and impetuous argument without hints

of needed caution and amendment. Even that august instrument, the Constitution of the United States, provided for changes in its own articles. The thinkers and guides of one generation cannot lay down minute rules for later generations. The study of history, philosophy, and science does not take the place of tact, technical training, and ability to meet new conditions. The criticism of a powerful book is itself a valuable method of preparing the mind for theoretical comprehension and practical understanding of the elements of a contemporary social situation.

The criticism which is here offered does not claim to cover all the defects of the book nor to deal with any particular point exhaustively. The chief purpose is to raise cautionary signals and start the reader on independent lines of reflection and reconsideration.

DEFECTS IN ECONOMIC THEORY AND PRACTICAL RECOMMENDATIONS

In Chapter XVII. our author says: "Wages form the price of labor; and this price, like that of every other commodity, is determined by the proportion which obtains between the supply of it in the market and the effective demand for it. Should the supply be diminished, or the demand increase, the price rises. Should the supply be increased, or the demand slacken, the price falls." From this fundamental position it is argued: "That no economic enlargements in the wealth and resources of a country can ensure aught like a permanent

comfort or sufficiency to the families of a land. Followed up as these enlargements are by a commensurate, or generally by an over-passing increase of population. . . . In these circumstances the highway to our secure and stable prosperity is not so much to enlarge the limit of our external means as to restrain the numbers of the population."

We are here at once involved in an economic controversy, not yet closed, in respect to the "wages fund" and the theory of population as taught by Malthus. It would require a large volume to discuss the various aspects of these problems.*

The Malthusian doctrine in Chalmers' teaching.—The core of this teaching is declared to be sound by the most important economists. It ever remains true that it is possible for population to multiply beyond its power to provide the means of existence, efficiency, and comfort. The theory has been pronounced false and immoral. It has been ridiculed and buried under contemptuous epithets. But both in economic science and in practice, even in the practice of those who refuse to accept the economic theory, it has held the ground in all civilized countries.

Those who point to the fact that wealth has increased faster than population, and use this well-established fact as a triumphant disproof of Malthus's doctrine of population, seem to overlook two aspects of the history. The

* Some recent discussions of these topics may be found in: Marshall, Principles of Economics, I., p. 572, etc.; F. A. Walker, The Wages Question; Political Economy (Advanced Course), p. 364, 3d ed.; North American Review, Jan., 1875; F. W. Taussig, Wages and Capital; A. T. Hadley, Economics, Chap. X.; Webb, Problems of Modern Industry, p. 161.

educated classes, including the higher ranks of mechanics and artisans, have acted on the advice of Malthus and Chalmers, and they multiply less rapidly than persons of the same classes early in the century, while the productive power of machinery and of industrial and commercial organization have vastly increased the national income. The best proof that Chalmers was right is that those who have followed his advice have reaped the reward in a larger average income. The other aspect of the history is tragic and pathetic: the population of the feeble, the defective, and the improvident has kept level with the means of subsistence only by means of theft, beggary, vice, and an enormous mortality, especially of infants. Those who believed Malthus and Chalmers have increased comfort, health, wealth, intellectual progress, and higher morality. Those who have not yet come under the sway of these ideas suffer the consequences and pass on the evil to their offspring.

But the doctrine needs modification; it is not altogether right, and it is not the only matter of importance. Chalmers laid emphasis on a single remedy of restricting population, and did not adequately consider its shortcoming. He did not, on one side, foresee the tremendous additions to the productive forces of the nation; on the other side he did not give sufficient weight to the pressure of population from the lower ranks and from distant countries.

To all that he says an intelligent wage-worker might reply with anger and scorn: "Of what value will it be to ordinary laborers to marry late if cheap labor may

constantly come up from the proletariat or be imported from countries where poverty is prolific? Those who have a partial monopoly of positions because of unusual skill may be protected from this competition by belonging to what Professor Cairnes called the 'non-competing groups.' But in many callings machinery reduces all to a low level and breaks down these barriers and dykes of skill. Dr. Chalmers himself actually advises the importation of cheap laborers from Ireland in order to overwhelm strikers and 'teach them a lesson' of the uselessness of trades-unions under the conditions of 'free competition' and 'natural economic laws.' Chalmers denounced any 'artificial' legislative or associated effort on behalf of the wage-workers; but the importation of half-starved Irishmen or Belgians or negroes, in time of strike, would seem to his mind perfectly natural and in accordance with the divine harmonies of political economy!"

Again, Chalmers did not and could not be expected to foresee the numerous artificial obstructions to competition devised by capitalists—patent and copyright privileges, the power of vast corporations, combinations, pools, trusts, which have been enabled to derive exceptional profits by means of charter privileges from public business, until the modern world is perplexed to know how to protect itself from these creatures of law.* The poorest, most shiftless and feeble of the population have many children and crowd the more careful, skilful, and provident workmen with their competition. In such circum-

*See Webb, Industrial Democracy, II., p. 644.

stances it is false and cruel to charge the wage-workers with the entire responsibility for inadequate wages, as Chalmers does when he says that their immoral and excessive child-breeding is the sole cause of low wages. Neither individual continence, nor a custom of late marriages in the higher classes of industrials, nor trade-union action, can prevent the invasion of numbers, so long as the poorest and weakest are so prolific.

Nor can society suffer these weaker members to perish without help. Modern nations base their customs and their poor laws on the assumption that every human being has a right to the means of existence, once he is born. No Christian state permits any citizen to starve. If private charity fails, public relief is provided.

If society thus accepts the responsibility for supporting those who fail to support themselves by that act, it gains the right to say how they shall be supported and how many children they shall have after the dependence begins. So long as a man takes care of himself he is legally free to live where he chooses and marry whom he will. But the moment he asks society to care for him he surrenders this liberty. The community, under all poor laws, has long asserted the right to say whether the paupers shall live in families and be permitted to multiply their kind, or in closed institutions. For those who are manifestly defective, as the feeble-minded, some states have already provided rural, non-competing, self-supporting celibate colonies. It seems probable that during the next half century this principle will be greatly extended. Such an extension of social control could not

have been understood before the days of Charles Darwin and the other biologists.

As to the actual historical facts of population, our distinguished author, like many other writers of his time, was altogether too absolute. In his "Political Economy" he wrote: "The great historical fact remains unshaken that, let the means of subsistence be increased however largely and suddenly, this is sure to be followed by a corresponding increase of population. . . . Every increase of food is followed up by an increase of population. . . . Through the medium of the stimulation given to population, it does what no other articles of merchandise can do; it multiplies its own consumers. A plenty of the first necessaries is the only species of plenty which surely and largely tells on the population."

Now the historical fact already alluded to is that wealth has greatly outgrown the general population.*

It is also a mistake of serious practical importance to affirm that specific information in regard to the law of population is of no value. Chalmers says: "We can imagine nothing more preposterous than the diffusion, for this purpose, of tracts on population, among the families of the land." Why, then, does the author himself continue, year after year, to publish, as widely as possible, just such tracts? Does he not distribute, wholesale and broadcast, the teaching of Malthus as almost the sole means of social salvation, economically and morally, of the poor? Did he imagine that none but physicians and magistrates would read his works?

* Nitti, La Population.

It was just because this doctrine was published and popularized, under various forms of practical advice, that the rate of increase of population fell off in all modern countries.*

Trades-Unions.—In the earlier decades of this century economists of distinction taught that combinations of wage-earners to raise wages were useless. Chalmers was in advance of many leaders of society in his time, because he strongly opposed the suppression of such associations by arbitrary legal force, and he held that they would gradually disappear before the march of economic experience and knowledge. His argument was a part of his general theory of the conditions which determine the rate of wages. The great economists of our age, having rejected or essentially modified the " wage fund " theory, no longer assume a hostile attitude to the unions, and very generally approve them. Extravagant expectations are sobered by economic science, but reasonable measures are encouraged.

The very general and bitter antagonism to trades-unions on the part of capitalist managers is in large part due to their discovery of the extreme efficiency of union methods of making bargains. The annals of the labor

* This table will show the tendency in the United States:

1850	Number of persons	per	family...	5.55
1860	"	"	" ...	5.28
1870	"	"	" ...	5.09
1880	"	"	" ...	5.04
1890	"	"	" ...	4.93

Here is shown a decrease of 11.17 per cent. The average duration of life seems to have increased about 10 per cent. The standard of life has risen. See C. D. Wright, Practical Sociology, p. 69.

movement furnish only too many illustrations of the questionable and often cruel measures employed to destroy these associations, so dear to wage-workers. Many economists and statesmen are convinced that workingmen will need the protection of law to prevent their employers from discharging those who belong to unions.

Chalmers predicted, on the basis of his theory, that hired laborers would, if left entirely free, soon weary of spending energy and money on a useless organization. But three-quarters of a century have passed and the hired laborers of all modern countries cling to their unions and make fraternal sacrifices for them as their best reliance in bargaining for the best possible terms. If this universal belief of educated workmen, after this long and costly trial, is a pure delusion, it would seem difficult for great bodies of men to learn anything from experience.

The opposition of Chalmers to unions was natural for him. He lived soon after the modern states had succeeded in breaking down the narrow monopolies and oppressions of the antiquated mediæval guilds and feudal privileges. The world was entering upon the magnificent enterprises of modern industry under a régime of freedom. Manufactures and commerce had begun to flourish as these ancient chains fell to the earth. The ruling members of society have generally looked upon combinations of wage-workers with class dislike, born of class interest. This instinct survives and is inevitable.

When Chalmers wrote, the capitalists were seeking to destroy the unions by legal enactment and police power.

For this there was some pretext. The unions, yet without the discipline of experience, were sometimes guilty of shameful and criminal acts which made a defence of their cause and principle exceedingly difficult. Some of the worst of these outbreaks occurred while the book was going through the press in the serial form. The strong manufacturers and their friends were bent on reactionary legislation, eager to make simple combination itself, apart from evidence of violence, a penal offence.

Chalmers urged, on economic ground, that such laws were entirely unnecessary. The criminal laws should be enforced, and they were adequate for the purpose. Actual attacks on persons, on liberty of labor, on property, should be severely punished. Trades-unions would die if left alone. They could not stand before "economic laws," those deities of the capitalists and economists. As a matter of policy it would be better for the workmen to discover the futility of unions by experience, and then they would not feel that their plan of protection had been suppressed by arbitrary and oppressive action.

Our prophet was wise, but he was not omniscient. He distinctly foretold the speedy dissolution of the unions, and yet they have actually grown in all civilized lands and become one of the most powerful and necessary elements in the regulation of industrial relations. Their existence is a mark of social progress. They hold a legally recognized position, and ethical sanctions have been given by society to all their essential aims and methods.

Those earlier trades-unions, even in their acts of vio-

lence, have found defenders among recent conservative economists. In reference to those very outbreaks of which Chalmers speaks, President F. A. Walker * says: "For myself, I entertain no doubt that the early strikes in England, which followed the repeal, in 1824, of the Combination acts, were essential to the breaking up of the power of custom and fear over the minds of the working classes of the kingdom. For centuries it had been a crime, by statute, for workmen to combine to raise wages or shorten the hours of labor, while masters were left perfectly free to combine to lower wages or lengthen the hours of labor. The beginning of the century found the laboring classes of England almost destitute of political franchises, unaccustomed to discussion and the free communication of thought, tax-ridden, poverty-stricken, illiterate. What else than the series of fierce revolts, the rebellions of down-trodden labor, which followed Huskisson's act of 1824, could, in any equal period of time, or, indeed, at smaller cost, have taught the employers of England to respect their laborers, and have taught the laborers of England to respect themselves; could have made the latter equally confident and self-reliant in pressing home a just demand, or made the former equally solicitous to refuse no demand that could reasonably be conceded? Nothing quickens the sense of justice and equity like the consciousness that unjust and inequitable demands or acts are likely to be promptly resented and strenuously resisted. Nothing is so potent to clarify the judgment and sober the temper, in questions of right or

* Political Economy (Advanced), p. 377.

wrong, as to know that a mistake will lead to a hard and a long fight."

The philanthropist believed in friendly societies and savings banks as means of individual thrift. He admits the principle of individual bargaining of laborer with employer, and, in admitting this, he gives large place to the objects of trades-unions. "Could they merely afford to slacken their work in a season of depressed wages, or to cease from working altogether, the overstocked markets would be far more speedily cleared away, and the remuneration for labor would again come back to its wonted or natural level."

The wage-workers of the higher ranks have made a discovery which is gradually being communicated to lower ranks of labor, and they learned their lesson by instinct and bitter trial, without help of philanthropists or economists, and in face of almost universal disapproval and contempt among the "upper classes." This discovery was that collective bargaining has all the advantages of individual bargaining, and with powerful elements in addition. If fifty thousand men have a single fund, under one direction, it is far more effective as an argument with employers than ten times the same sum scattered about in fifty thousand insignificant hoards.

The economists have gradually come around to admit into their theory what the humble and often illiterate wage-workers of England found out under the stern tuition of the struggle for existence, that "in union there is strength." No economist would now approve this language of our author: "For the purpose of working a

good effect it is not necessary that there should be any combined or co-operate movement. . . . The thing works far best when it works naturally." All will agree, and capitalists most of all, that collective bargaining is like the bundle of rods firmly bound together and difficult to break, while individual bargaining is the single rod which a child's hand can snap.

A few quotations and references will illustrate the position of present-day economics in relation to trades-unions. The honored president of Yale University says: "At the beginning of the present century the law and the public sentiment among the property owning classes were both unfavorable to the organization of labor. This was conspicuously the case in England. To say that laborers were not allowed to combine in defence of their rights is to put the matter altogether too mildly. The slightest attempt at concurrent action to increase the price of their services was visited by the severest penalties. As late as 1834, six Dorchester laborers were sent as convicts to Botany Bay for the mere act of forming a labor organization which had not even asked for an advance of wages. But, with the growth of democratic power, a more liberal policy began to prevail. Not the least among the series of English factory acts were those which gave increasing recognition of the right of laborers to combine.

"The change in public sentiment toward trades-unions has not quite kept pace with changes in the law. In the minds of a large section of the public, labor unions are chiefly associated with strikes. It is believed by many who ought to know better that such organizations exist

for the purpose of striking, and that if the organizations were suppressed, industrial peace would be secured." *

The distinguished professor of economics at Harvard has written, in a classic work: "Much has been said of late years in regard to . . . the importance of his [the laborer's] strength in bargaining. Recurrently—as a rule, at short intervals—the contract on which his income depends must be renewed. If he stands alone, if he has no savings from past income which would enable him to wait and see what the market offers, if he is ignorant and generally helpless, he bargains at great disadvantage. If he is banded with his fellows, if he possesses the wherewithal to make a trial of strength, and if he has shrewd and well-informed leaders, he bargains to the best advantage. The strength which the trades-union gives the hired laborer in dealing with his employers was not doubted even in the days of greatest faith in the natural laws which were supposed to regulate economic phenomena in general, and wages in particular. No one would question it in these less conservative times." † We have seen that Chalmers and others did question at least the final issue of the attempt to get a better bargain by artificial organization.

The eminent professor of economics at Cambridge University, England, gives a carefully guarded but outspoken approval of the legitimate function of trades-unions: ‡ "The power of unions to raise general wages by direct

* A. T. Hadley, Economics, p. 352.
† F. W. Taussig, Wages and Capital (1895), p. 79.
‡ Alfred Marshall, Economics of Industry (1892), p. 408.

means is never great; it is never sufficient to contend successfully with the great economic forces of the age, when their drift is against a rise of wages. But yet it is sufficient materially to benefit the worker, when it is so directed as to co-operate with and to strengthen those general agencies which are tending to improve his position morally and economically."

To the same effect writes one of the foremost economists of the greatest German university, Professor A. Wagner.*

The late President F. A. Walker† may again be quoted: "With a body of employers, few, rich, and powerful, having a friendly understanding among themselves and acting aggressively for the reduction of wages or the extension of the hours of work, and, on the other side, a body of laborers, numerous, ignorant, poor, mutually distrustful, while each feels under a terrible necessity to secure employment, who shall say that such a body of laborers might not be better able to resist the destructive pressure from the employing body if organized and disciplined, with a common purse and with mutual obligations enforced by the public opinion of their class?"

The economic theory which controlled the earliest thinkers and capitalists, rejected the so-called "paternal" legislation which has grown with the political power of the wage-workers, and is certain to be extended by the same force. We have advanced so far as to demand, in the name of humanity and general welfare, a certain

* See Unternehmergewinn und Arbeitslohn (1897), S. 7.
† Political Economy (Advanced, 1898), p. 376.

minimum standard of sanitary regulation. Hours have been shortened where the longer periods of toil were found injurious to the health and industrial efficiency of children and women, and even of men. The minimum space for air and the minimum provision for light have been fixed by statute. In prisons the labor and diet of criminals are determined, independent of wardens and contractors, by the physician. The state has a right to deprive of liberty, but, for less than capital crimes, does not wish to deprive of health and life. One step more in the same direction and for the same reasons, and we shall have a legal regulation of the minimum wage at which employers will be permitted to hire labor, that minimum being determined by medical authority as necessary for health and industrial efficiency.

Such a step would at once reveal sharply the line, now confused, which divides pauper labor from real self-supporting labor, and would make evident that many manufacturers and tradesmen are now partly supporting their business and profits out of the poor fund. Such a suggestion seems to many persons chimerical now; much more was it impossible for Chalmers to conceive.

It seems probable that Chalmers never clearly realized the existence of a considerable class who could not under any circumstances produce the entire cost of their own support. Rapid machinery has made manifest to all that many of the "unemployed" are also "unemployable." All schemes for providing work for the latter class in ordinary industry must be shattered on the rock of incapacity.

Certain movements for the amelioration of the conditions of laborers were not within the vision of the age of Chalmers. Friendly societies had long existed, but had not begun to assume the immense importance of recent years.* The capacity of workingmen to secure advantages through their own organization of industry through salaried officers was not suspected. The Rochdale Pioneers and the Christian Socialists had not yet taught, by prophecy and practical demonstration, that a system of co-operation can be built up by wage-earners which can command the attention and respect of the business world.

Factory legislation is hardly mentioned by Chalmers. He was not looking in that direction. His conscience had not been aroused to feel the evils of the factory system in crowded cities. His political theory of the functions of government might have stood in his way to invent legal means of promoting the national welfare. The life-work of another great philanthropist, of different theory and training, was needed to supplement the service of the Scotch reformer.†

Municipal ministrations have helped to improve the physical, intellectual, and æsthetic life of urban workmen beyond all the possibilities of individual enterprise or voluntary associations. And these efforts have been put forth upon a theory of the proper function of local

* See Baernreither, English Associations of Workingmen; H. D. Lloyd, Labor Co-partnership; Beatrice Potter (Mrs. Webb), The Co-operative Movement in Great Britain; B. Jones, Co-operative Production; G. J. Holyoake, The History of Co-operation in England.

† See Hodder's Life of the Earl of Shaftesbury.

government which was formerly regarded with detestation.*

The benevolence of our author in his attitude to wage-workers is unquestionably sincere. He really desired to see them happy and properly educated to fit them for their station in life. But he did not sympathize with, he could not understand, the aspirations of democracy. He did not appreciate the meaning of the social current which bears that name. He had much of the spirit of the magnanimous patron and aristocrat. He speaks of "the lower orders" in a way which would provoke revolt in a modern audience. His use of the epithet "plebeian" sounds very offensive to modern ears.

One of the propositions of the "Political Economy" is "that the law of primogeniture is essentially linked with the political strength and other great public interests of the nation." Modern democracy, where it has come to power, totally rejects this feudalistic doctrine and all that it implies. Each child is placed on a basis of equal legal advantage in the inheritance of family property. The individual is not to be sacrificed to family, or especially to an oldest son.

We discern ecclesiastical bias and clerical limitations. We should acknowledge the tolerant spirit of Chalmers in relation to dissenters. He appreciated and generously praised their services. He defended them from aspersion and legal persecution. He associated with them on friendly terms, and worshipped with them as a brother. But he never could quite rise above the tone and feeling

* See A. Shaw, Municipal Government in Great Britain.

of one who is brought up in a State establishment. Toleration is not the treatment which the members of a self-supporting religious body ask for themselves. Entire equality of rights before the law, and abolition of all legal privileges for any, are the demands of so-called dissenters in modern democracy. The word "toleration" is intended to mean something very kind, but to a modern dissenter it is an insult. The writings of Chalmers mark the transition from the old attitude of hostility and contempt to the modern position of equality in the State. He probably never suspected that the very words which he meant to be kind sounded with a tone of arrogance and pity which gave pain to many who admired him.

The clergyman's bias is also only too apparent. He never quite succeeded in looking at government and business as a man of the world sees things. Held comments on this fact and marks it as a limitation.

The apparent failure of Chalmers' scheme of poor relief must be considered. With all the energy of his active nature, urged by the most benevolent motives and clearest convictions as to purpose and way, the author pleaded and toiled, to the end of his days, for the abolition of public and official out-door relief—that is, the aid of poor families in their homes by funds raised by taxation. He organized parishes of the poor to show that such relief is not necessary. He gave illustrations of the evils of the English system of "pauperism," which was creeping into Scotland.

And most men would say that he failed. Scotland

rejected his message * on this point and introduced the English system, and adheres to it up to this day, with no apparent prospect of any serious change of policy. Germany has since then extended and perfected a system based on the very principle which Chalmers fought —that the State is under obligation to aid and support the helpless poor. Even Catholic countries, as France and Italy, have moved far in the direction of admitting a legal "right to live," by extending the legal measures for relief of dependent families. The great labor move-

* The main facts are summed up in a note to Sir George Nicholls' History of the English Poor Law, I., p. 8, note. "In Scotland, down to 1579, there was little difference in principle from the practice pursued in this country [England], Scotch legislation following English example at intervals sometimes of forty or fifty years, and the important Act of James VI., cap. 74 (on which the Scotch Poor Laws mainly rested for a long time), closely resembling the English Act of 14 Elizabeth, cap. 5. Thenceforward, however, the two systems tended to diverge, particularly in respect of the provision of funds. The Scotch Law permitted, indeed, the raising of money by compulsory assessment, but only if voluntary contributions should be insufficient; and, as a matter of fact, the power of assessment was rarely employed. Funds were collected and administered principally by quasi-ecclesiastical machinery, the amount of relief being proportioned to the amount of money available; and this fact, combined with a denial to the able-bodied, of any right to relief under any circumstances, and with the general absence of properly constituted workhouses, in which adequacy of relief might be secured, led to a rigid economy which entailed sometimes very great suffering and privation among the poorer classes. In consequence of this state of things, and also, no doubt, owing to the example of the new English Poor Law, the Scotch Poor Law Amendment Act, 1845, was passed. This act was directed mainly to the supersession of the voluntary system of assessment, and to the establishment of workhouses, or rather 'poorhouses,' the adoption of either course being, however, still optional. The immediate result was a steady rise in the amount of poor relief, in proportion to the spreading of the operation of the act. This was, nevertheless, to be expected; and although the fluctuations of poor law expenditure have sometimes caused alarm, the principle of the workhouse test, with compulsory assessment, has been more and more accepted, and at the present day may be said to be firmly established by experience."

See also R. P. Lamond, The Scottish Poor Laws, 1892, pp. 227, 228.

ment, with its strong socialistic tendencies, is opposed to the substitution of private charity for public relief.

What are the chief reasons for the apparent failure of the voluntary system of private and church poor relief? (1) The parochial system broke upon the rocks of sectarian divisions.* The parochial system of the Scotch clergyman was inspired by the rural ideal of a simple community where the state church commands the entire field, and where dissent is almost a negligible quantity. But modern cities have a different character, especially American cities. No one denomination is dominant. There are as many methods as there are pastors. The sole institution which all regard as common property is the state, or its local representative, the municipality. The confusion of Babel reigns in the conflict of tongues, and every distinct language carries with it conflict of ecclesiastical methods.

Whether the experiments now being tried to secure a federation of churches of all denominations are to succeed, time alone will reveal. Certain it is that the churches can never have anything like a conspicuous share in the direction of poor relief so long as they remain without common and unified organization for the purpose.

The reforms of the English Poor Law and of its administration, in 1834 and later years, removed some of

* James Bonar, Malthus and His Work, p. 180: "His (Chalmers') parochial system would have been an admirable substitute for the Poor Law on the (unfortunately untrue) hypothesis of an absence of sects."

the most objectionable features and cut the ground from under some of the most severe criticisms. Pauperism diminished under the application of the severe workhouse test, more rigid investigation, and centralized supervision of local administration. Chalmers prophesied an increase of the burden even if the system should be modified, and he thought it full of incurable evils; but a more careful and rational management falsified his expectations in some measure and broke the force of his appeal.

The exposure of actual suffering of the poor in Scotland about 1844 stirred the national heart and conscience and led to the adoption of the English system of compulsory poor relief from taxation. Of course, the system which Chalmers had in mind was never fairly and fully tried. Perhaps the country was not yet ripe for it. At any rate, the public could not and would not endure the spectacle of unrelieved misery in cities where the demoralized and inadequate church charity left thousands to starve. What might have happened if the churches had all united in working a voluntary system in all parts of the great towns, we can never tell. But the actual fact was that investigation revealed a mass of distress most startling and shocking, and led to the adoption of legal measures to extend relief to all who were in peril of starvation.

The argument for the abolition of official relief, on the ground that a fund raised by compulsory tax is not true charity, since it is compelled by legal force, was shown to be weak at the point where Chalmers admitted a public support of defectives—the blind, deaf-mutes, in-

sane, feeble-minded, the sick and injured.* Chalmers objected to the relief of the aged poor on the ground that old age can be foreseen and should be provided for during the earning period, and because children should care for aged parents. Sickness and accidents cannot be foreseen, he said, and therefore they may properly be the occasion of relief from public funds. But we now know that sickness and accident can be foretold and the average risk for a trade or group can be approximately calculated. And we also know that, with the present rates of wages, there is a very large class of the poor who are not able to provide by individual saving either for sickness or for old age; that social organization of some kind is essential. For the most needy and miserable class, where the capacity for voluntary organization is very low, no agency short of the government can cope with the difficulty.†

The doctrine of state duty to the aged poor which is rapidly growing in the modern mind is thus stated in the preamble to the Old-Age Pensions Act of New Zealand: "Whereas, it is *equitable* that deserving persons who, during the prime of life, have helped to bear the public burdens of the colony by the payment of taxes, and to open up its resources by their skill and labor, should receive from the colony a pension in their old age, Be it enacted . . ."

The fact is that the conception of the state held by

* See Chapter XIII., Christian and Civic Economy.

† See Webb, Problems of Modern Industry, p. 156 ff.; Charles Booth, The Aged Poor, and Pauperism and the Endowment of Old Age.

Chalmers is obsolete. He shared the common belief of his time. Government was thought to be something imposed on the people, and at best a necessary evil. We have come to believe that government by the people, for the people is their common organ for securing welfare. We are returning to the Pauline conception that government is of the good God, a ministry of good, a terror to the evil only, and for the help of man. Justice, benevolence, and education may properly be promoted through this agency as well as through the Church, and it is simply a practical question which is the best organ in given circumstances for the purpose. An act is not necessarily good because the Church does it, and there are many acts of government which are good even when judged from the highest standards. The social democrat naturally prefers the government agency, because there is no patronage. The Christian may co-operate with the unbelieving democrat in legal measures, because the State to him is providential and clothed with religious sanctions.

The parochial system under consideration had a fatal weakness; it was based on the idea that the people of a city district should provide altogether for the dependent families of that district. This principle is suitable for a rural parish where there is little abject poverty and where the resources of the neighborhood are ample. But our modern cities pack their very poor in wretched neighborhoods, while the comfortable and rich families reside in elegant quarters and delightful suburbs, as far as possible from the filthy streets and squalid tenements of

the poor. The purely parochial system, under such conditions, is a mockery. It lays the burden of the miserable all upon those who are already almost submerged. It would relieve the well-to-do from all sense of responsibility for those whose income is, for any reason, inadequate for support, and it would encourage them to forget the destitute who belong in another parish. There is enough of the spirit of suburban cowardice and selfishness already; it does not require help from high philanthropic authority.

Dr. Chalmers started from the right principle, that it is well to cultivate a small field thoroughly and hope for imitation. But his plan did not provide for, and actually rejected in express terms, central organization for an entire city. The German municipal system and that of the Charity Organization Society have avoided this error. They both retain his valuable principle of "locality," but they also provide for a central office which may serve as a mediating agency for all the separate districts, and they ask financial and personal help from those most competent and responsible. The history of municipal life emphasizes the solidarity and community interest of the city as one organism, one united society.

The Parochial System of Elementary Schools.—Chalmers was led by the circumstances of contemporary society to look to local voluntary associations and the fee system for the support of primary education. His distrust of state interference clouded his judgment on this point, and, indeed, governments were not yet ripe for the full task of universal free education of the people.

He thought that each parish in a city could not only provide for all its poor, but also pay a part of the cost of tuition, and he believed that the families of the poor will make better use of schools if they make a partial provision for support out of their own scant means. This doctrine has still some able exponents. But the entire tendency of democracy is in the direction of absolutely free tuition, with regulations of compulsory attendance. Society protects the common interest by preventing pauperism, vice, and crime. A suitable elementary education is absolutely necessary for social defence, and it is cheaper than reformatories and prisons. Democracy believes that the community is under moral obligations to offer equal opportunities of education to all young citizens. Universal suffrage gives this demand the force of the entire population. The wealth of a people must support and educate the people, and there is no such thing as absolutely private property. Public necessities must be met from public funds. These must be raised equitably, according to the financial ability of the owners of wealth, and not by excessive drafts on a small number of willing philanthropists.

Chalmers has made some wise and suggestive remarks, of permanent value, in respect to the function of voluntary associations and of wealthy philanthropists in education. The pioneer and experimental movements are the suitable field for private benevolent enterprise. Illustrations may be drawn from the early establishment of primary schools in Great Britain and America; from the movements for establishing kindergartens, day nurseries,

workingmen's clubs, social settlements, college and university extension, and other forms of frontier experimentation and leadership. When a movement has passed the stage of hypothesis and experiment to assured success, it may be "taken over" by the municipality or commonwealth, if it can be reduced to a degree of routine, is supported by public sentiment, and is otherwise adapted to the machinery of governmental administration.

State Support of the Church.—Chalmers was born into the State Church. He was brought up to believe that it is natural, just, and desirable to support religious agencies by funds derived from taxation. In several of his works he employs arguments to justify and enforce this belief. To American readers this argument is a historic curiosity, but it is by no means obsolete in Europe. Our author is quite confident that the State has no right to regulate manufactures and trade, or to aid the laborer, because all men actually desire and voluntarily seek such material goods as food, clothes, houses and various comforts.

But the people, he claims, do not want religion, at least until it has been urged upon them by the ruling classes. Therefore the government, which then meant the "upper classes," should provide ministers and edifices.

Before his death Dr. Chalmers learned many things on this subject. By experience with politicians who represented legal authority, he found that a government will not maintain the Church without control of the manner in which the public funds are used. This implies control of the appointment of ministers. Bitter personal expe-

rience demonstrated that this inevitable and logical action of government is fatal to that freedom of life which is essential to an aggressive, sincere, and successful evangelical service. A free church must be a self-supporting church.

Another lesson came to Chalmers as a joyful surprise: that the people, even very poor people, will cheerfully and liberally support their own churches if they believe in them; and that a faithful, energetic, popular ministry need have no fear of being abandoned. Even before he left the Establishment, Dr. Chalmers led in a great and successful movement to augment the financial resources of the Church from voluntary contributions, after many appeals to government had brought meagre results.

It is curious to observe that the positions held by Dr. Chalmers have been exactly reversed. He pleaded for support of religion by taxation, but rejected State help for industry and relief of the poor. Our generation is inclined to leave church support entirely to voluntary gifts of believers, but aids the workingman with factory legislation, with relief of dependents, and with free schools.

Change in the Character of Urban Populations.—Dr. Chalmers draws a picture of the pastor or Sunday-school teacher going forth among the poor of a large Scotch or English town to invite the children of the poor to the local assembly of worship. They meet everywhere a cordial welcome and reverential treatment. This was his experience. The religious meeting could be made a centre of common life in the large town.

Within certain limits this is still true. Kindness and courtesy are generally met by a friendly response, where the visitor is not an intruder and is tactful. But the modern workingmen, especially in American cities of the Northern States, in this generation, manifest quite different traits. Our people are no longer homogeneous in language, in customs, in religious beliefs. A "downtown" district will reveal to the canvasser that the families are Protestant, Catholic, Jewish, and Confucian; English, Irish, German, Italian, Polish, Hebrew. It is not unusual for the most tactful and zealous missionaries, even when they understand the languages of the district, to be utterly unable, after years of earnest labor, to make much visible impression on certain elements of the population. They will not mingle; they will not make the "mission" a place of common resort. They are quickly sensitive and watchful in respect to patronage, and refuse to be obsequious. To prove that they are "just as good as anyone" they will sometimes send the visitor away with a stinging rebuke. Agnosticism has taken deep root in some places, but the chief obstacle is religious, linguistic, and social differences. The discovery of this difficulty has promoted the establishment of social settlements which seek to shake off suggestions of "charity" and "missions," and to bring people into genuinely democratic relations.*

* See C. R. Henderson, Social Settlements.

IV

SOME OF THE IMPORTANT CONTRIBUTIONS OF DR. CHALMERS TO MODERN SOCIAL MOVEMENTS OF THOUGHT AND ACTION

In the Field of Political Economy.—It cannot be claimed that our author made any very important original contribution to economic or political theory. He does not rank among the creative men in these departments of science. In an individual and independent spirit he uses the works of Adam Smith, Malthus, and Ricardo. He is a popularizer of the economic orthodoxy of his time, and his purpose is, as he himself declares, entirely practical. He has not in mind the organization of a system of explanatory thought, but of a system of action for the betterment of the character and condition of the working classes and of the very poor. This direct practical purpose is explicitly stated in both the works which are here under more immediate consideration. The purpose of writing determines the selection and the arrangement of materials. His books are pleas with church leaders, special arguments to persuade them to adopt a specific policy of teaching, city missionary service, and relief of the destitute. He also seeks to influence the associations of workingmen, the legislators, and the parish

and urban administrators of poor relief. He has an ambition to overturn the English system of poor laws; and this wider outlook compels him to seek for general principles, social laws which have a more than provincial significance.

While Chalmers is not an original authority in economic theory, he is an independent thinker and a powerful writer. He has been recognized with respect in the history of the science as one who has brought out certain elements into clearer light than any other author. The necessity of making himself understood by a popular audience gave an advantage in point of style and manner of statement which reacted on thinking itself and made it more precise at some points, although the exactness of technical language had sometimes to be sacrificed.

An article in the "Handwörterbuch der Staatswissenschaften" expresses this judgment: "By laying strong emphasis on the importance of Christianity in industrial life, Chalmers has earned credit in our field. In general, however, he follows the reigning economic views. He is a follower of Ricardo, but above all a zealous advocate of Malthus' doctrine of population. He recommends the transformation of all taxes into the single land-tax, without, however, accepting the physiocratic basis for his demand."

The opinion of Dr. Hanna, technically not so valuable as that just quoted, is more favorable: "As a political economist he was the first to unfold the connection that subsists between the fertility of the soil and the social condition of the community, the rapid manner in which

capital is reproduced, and the general doctrine of a limit to all the modes by which national wealth may accumulate." *

John Stuart Mill, after giving an explanation of the rapid reproduction of wealth destroyed by fire, wars, and other great calamities, adds a remark which gives his estimate of our author: " This simple explanation was never given (so far as I am aware) by any political economist before Dr. Chalmers, a writer many of whose opinions I think erroneous, but who has always the merit of studying phenomena at first hand and expressing in a language of his own, which often uncovers aspects of the truth that the received phraseologies only tend to hide." †

In his valuable treatise, " A History of Political Economy," Dr. Ingram has this to say: " Thus Chalmers reviews *seriatim* and gravely sets aside all the schemes usually proposed for the amelioration of the economic condition of the people, on the ground that an increase of comfort will lead to an increase of numbers, and so the last state of things will be worse than the first." This does not seem to be an adequate statement, although it is partly justified by some expressions of Chalmers. It is true that the " orthodox " economists who followed Malthus were very sceptical as to the result of an increase of wages, because they feared that the members of the working-classes would match increased production with more than corresponding supply of consumers. But full

* Article Chalmers, in Encyclopædia Britannica.

† Principles of Political Economy, I., p. 110. New York, 1884. Compare L. Cossa, The Study of Political Economy, pp. 329, 333. New York, 1893. Roscher, Political Economy, Secs. 216, 217, 242.

justice requires us to add that Chalmers did not regard this conduct as necessary. He shows that in Scotland, among the poor peasants, just such continence as he advised was common in the days before poor laws injured their self-reliance and foresight, and he wrote on purpose to persuade the working-people that the low condition of wages was not inevitable and fatal, and that they could, by determining the supply of laborers, set the rate of their income. He demonstrates his confidence in the hopefulness of their cause by developing a system of educational, religious, and economic devices for improving character, conduct, and material prosperity.

A Social Science Anticipated.—It may fairly be claimed that Chalmers assisted, in some degree, in preparing the way for sociology as the science which seeks to co-ordinate the results of special social sciences, especially economics, politics, ecclesiastical polity, educational and charitable administration. In seeking a systematic basis of principles for social reform he was compelled to abandon the method of abstraction often employed in economics and politics, and look at the actual concrete complex of social relations in their unity and synthesis. The word "sociology" had not yet been suggested, but, in the effort to select a word to describe his scientific aim, he happily hits more than once upon the epithet "politics" and employs it almost in the Greek sense to cover the entire unity of social relations and associations in a community—something far more comprehensive and deeper than government, law, or administration. This definition of "politics" makes it very nearly equivalent to "sociology."

Sometimes he employs the expression "moral" to distinguish the idea of community obligations—domestic, political, educational, ecclesiastical. The time was not yet ripe for the clear discovery of a method or discipline for the co-ordination of the data supplied by the subordinate sciences—biology, psychology, economics, politics, comparative religion, philology, anthropology, ethnology, because these sciences were themselves in an early stage of formation, as sociology is now.

But it was much to show the need for this larger outlook and to assist in attaining it. Every science has had its beginnings in practical efforts to gain certain goods or desirable results, to remove obstacles and avoid evils, and to find a way through a new environment. In this practical struggle the law of the process reveals itself to men of philosophic mind, and then theory helps to illumine the road for all succeeding workers; science pays the debt it owes to the practical man, and pays with generous interest.

The Scotch divine possessed, in very high degree, the gifts of the pioneer practical worker and the reflective philosopher. Mr. Quick, in his "Educational Reformers," says: "It is rather jumping at conclusions to assume, with some of our countrymen, that if a man does not think, he does act. . . . A good many men who do not expend energy in thought are by no means strong in action. In education they have no desire either to think the best in thought or to do the best that is done. They won't inquire about either, and they show the most impartial ignorance of both." Happy is the nation and

age whose influential leaders combine the love of social science with the love of man; who seek truth for truth's sake, and also for man's sake, with the reasonable belief that no permanent good can rest on falsehood, and that all really great discoveries in theory must eventually minister to the welfare of the race. Chalmers certainly assisted in the creation of a science of social welfare by the largeness of his views and the rich contents of his ideals.

In the Science and Art of Charity.—Here we may claim a distinguished place for Dr. Chalmers. In the German literature of the Inner Mission and of the Elberfeld system of municipal poor relief we frequently come upon his name, and it is mentioned always with profound respect. The Inner Mission, as an organized system, dates from the epoch-making speeches of Johann Wichern at the revolutionary period of 1848-49.*

The Elberfeld system was organized in 1852 by a magistrate and a parson. It was a development of earlier German methods, with improvements; but it owed much to the then well-known experiments of Chalmers in his parochial labors in Glasgow and Edinburgh.

The Charity Organization Society was first established in London in 1868, and its methods were introduced into the United States at Buffalo, by an English clergyman, Rev. S. H. Gurteen, in 1877.

Each of these great social movements naturally grew

* See articles on the German Inner Mission, American Journal of Sociology, 1896, by C. R. Henderson; Schaefer, Leitfaden der inneren Mission; Wurster, Die Lehre von der inneren Mission; Williams, Church and State in Germany.

out of the past, and drew suggestions from many sources. But at certain points they were indebted directly to Chalmers not only for hints of method, but also for the clear demonstration of successful experiment. The power of the example is by no means near exhaustion, and it will be better appreciated by the public in the coming century than it ever has been in the past.

After having explained the failure of Chalmers in the preceding pages, it may seem at first sight absurd now to present his parochial system as the model for church and charity workers. The fact is, he did not fail. His plan was a local success. His principles were sound and enduring. His personal administration was marvellous. It was society which failed, because it was not yet ripe for his noble ideal of a *world without a pauper.* Economic conditions are too low for the complete working of his method. Compromises must be made with inferior machinery. The time may come when the vital principles of the system will be triumphantly vindicated, and already they are commanding increasing assent and imitation.

Social conditions are ever changing. Particular schemes and devices must regard these changes. But permanent laws direct the movements and great ideals shine aloft like stars. We must ever distinguish between the abiding principles and the transitory methods. Without claiming entire originality for Chalmers, we may affirm that he placed them in clear light, urged them with persuasive eloquence, and demonstrated their value by the scientific process of verification by costly and self-sacrificing experiment.

One of the most fruitful ideas in the literary and pastoral work of Chalmers was that of the "principle of locality." He urged, by word and deed, that the best philanthropic service is rendered to a community by those who map out a small district and cultivate it intensively and thoroughly. This principle is an essential factor in the German system of municipal relief, in the Charity Organization Society, in the Social Settlements, and in the Federation of Churches. They all aim at a thorough pervasion of the entire life of the families in a limited district. Dr. E. Muensterberg, head of the relief administration of Berlin, urges "decentralization" of charities and the building up of groups of trained visitors who are thoroughly acquainted with a given area.

Closely connected with the principle of locality is that of personal service—"friendly visiting," in recent phrase. His message on this subject is still vital, fresh, and necessary. People who live in an age of absorbing mercantile interest are only too apt to be swayed by the feeling that money can buy any form of good; that material relief is all that the poor need and want; that purely spiritual service has no value and will not be appreciated. There is a constant tendency in the undiscriminating popular mind to identify "charity" with gifts of soup, meat, clothes, and rent payments. Chalmers had learned from the Scriptures, from church history, and from successful pastoral labors, that we may win the confidence, the gratitude, and the devotion of multitudes of the people without coarse bribes; and that the distributor of

alms is very apt to attract the indolent and hypocritical while he repels those who struggle nobly with hard conditions in order to avoid dependence and have a little over for spiritual ends. He showed by trial that good men and gracious women could draw to themselves and their cause great companies of wage-earners, in the most wretched quarters of a city, simply by visiting their homes as neighbors on errands for savings-banks, local libraries, Sunday-schools, and other common social interests.

Even in such purely mechanical parts of charity work as making investigations and records, Chalmers showed great sagacity and practical sense. In recent forms of philanthropic organization, the value of complete knowledge and registration of information is recognized. These methods enabled the parish officers to reduce the burden of relief and to act directly and wisely instead of stumbling about in the dark.

The great and absorbing purpose of Chalmers was to "abolish pauperism," that form of poor relief which draws its funds from taxation and is administered by government. In previous paragraphs we have seen the immediate failure of this vast design. In a certain sense the immediate abolition of this out-door public relief is impracticable. Under present conditions it is very generally necessary to prevent great suffering, and it will probably be a long time before modern communities will be ready to cut it off altogether. And yet the world is making progress toward the goal which Chalmers held before his mind. He was right in declaring that the relation

of dependence upon public charity is essentially degrading. It is at best only a little better than death or crime, at least for many who depend upon it. The administrators of the English and of the German system have always sought methods of reducing this most dangerous form of relief to its lowest terms. They restrict the help to those who are actually unable to work. In England the disagreeable alternative of the workhouse is offered to able-bodied dependents who seek relief, in order to make it as distasteful as possible. In Germany less reliance is placed on the rude and severe workhouse test and more on the influence and tactful help of visitors who strive to induce and assist the poor to avoid resting upon public funds.

But these negative and individual schemes for reducing out-door relief are not entirely satisfactory. It is demonstrable that much of the dependence of the paupers is due to excessively low wages, to evil sanitary conditions, and to unusual calamities. Hence modern states are seeking in all possible ways to provide by insurance funds for times of accident, sickness, and old age, without application to public charity. A great part of the motive in establishing workingmen's insurance is to restrict the extent of relief, on the ground that it is degrading, even when kindly administered.

Of course, it is found that many of those who become paupers have really led a criminal career. The problem of caring for these should be carefully distinguished from that of poor relief, and especially from the problem of wage-workers. The correctional and custodial activity

of government should control the life of those who are addicted to vice and crime. A system of workhouses, agricultural colonies, and asylums for the perverted and feeble-minded is gradually being developed in Europe and America. When this system has been made complete and effective through police administration, a very considerable part of the pauper class will be removed from the rolls of charity.

That the abolition of public out-door relief in American cities is practicable, and by no means visionary, is shown by the fact that Brooklyn, New York City, and Philadelphia several years ago closed up this department of relief and have found private charity entirely competent to meet all needs of this kind, with no more suffering than would occur under the old system. It is too early to predict the ultimate outcome of these tendencies. But the fundamental principle of Chalmers is meeting wider and wider acceptance: the income of an industry ought to be the support of the industrious members of that industry; upon all who steal and beg, corrective discipline should be enforced. After that, local charity, carefully organized, would meet all needs. While the leaders of the "labor movement" are opposed to the substitution of private almsgiving for public relief, they are not in antagonism to any promising method of abolishing the economic conditions which make pauperism necessary. The "industrials" the world over declare that they do not want charity, but are seeking justice. This intense and deepening hatred of dependence is a sign of manliness, vigor, sound moral health. Every

patriot and philanthropist should greet this sentiment with joy and hope. The social state in which pauperism would be no factor was the one for which Chalmers worked. In a limited space, under the most trying and discouraging circumstances, he proved that it could be approximately realized. Such an ideal will not die out of social consciousness and memory. It will persistently reassert itself after every temporary defeat. It will be a steady force always pressing in the right direction.

The morbid element in society is not necessarily permanent. Social pathology is a subordinate and evanescent side of social science. Pauperism must not be regarded as inevitable. There are even now higher functions for charity than material relief of dependents. If a nation were absolutely without a vagabond or a thief, it could then go forward with a freedom and lightness of step which is impossible while we must carry the burden of abnormal men and families. This is the deep design of the book at whose portal we are standing.

There is a limitless field for the discovery of truth, for the creation of beauty, for education of the spirit, for worthier worship. The institutions which men have erected to fulfil these ends are the real and lasting field of social science. The close and climax of our book is a discussion, not of pauperism, but of the sublime prospect of universal education.

The educational ideal of John Locke was the training of a "gentleman" for the pleasures and occupations of a privileged class. Comenius, the famous educator of the seventeenth century, a Christian minister, a votary

of science, a precursor of true democracy, had said: "Not only are the children of the rich and noble to be drawn to the school, but all alike, gentle and simple, rich and poor, boys and girls, in great towns and small, down to the country villages. And for this reason: Everyone who is born a human being is born with this intent—that he should be a human being, that is, a reasonable creature, ruling over the other creatures and bearing the likeness of his Maker."

And the great Pestalozzi's educational confession runs thus: "From my youth up I felt what a high and indispensable human duty it is to labor for the poor and miserable, . . . that he may attain to a consciousness of his own dignity through his feeling of the universal powers and endowments which he possesses awakened within him; that he may not only learn to gabble over by rote the religious maxim that 'man is created in the image of God, and is bound to live and die as a child of God,' but may himself experience its truth by virtue of the divine power within him, so that he may be raised not only above the ploughing oxen, but also above the man in purple and silk who lives unworthily of his high destiny." To this democratic group of educational reformers the somewhat aristocratic Chalmers was related by virtue of his creed, his devotion, his aspirations, his ideals.

The Influence of Chalmers on Modern Methods of Church Work, Especially in Cities.—During the early decades of the nineteenth century the effects of the "great industry" were seen in the rapid growth of towns. Man-

ufactures were gathering the people into large masses and crowding them together in vast hives. The capitalistic organization of industry was breaking down the class of independent hand-workers who made goods in their homes and was building up a separate economic class of wage-workers who were "stripped of property and tools, and had nothing to sell but their labor." The familiar social divisions of rural communities, those which separated and distinguished the members of the land-owning class from laborers on the farms, were fading. The wage-earners were already coming to "class consciousness" and opposing their interests to those of the upper classes who still reserved to themselves the suffrage, the function of government, and the privileges of education.

Chalmers shows distinctly that this new class of wage-workers had already broken away from the Church and had become bitter, hostile, alienated from the governing, privileged, and professional classes. The Church must win them back or see them become practically heathen and foreigners.

Chalmers did not regard this class hostility as desirable or tolerable; he sought to make religion a moral bond by personal mediation of living representatives of the sacred and elevated influences of the higher life. The central principle of his evangelizing scheme was the same as that of his relief method—the "principle of locality." He saw the significance of the neighborhood for philanthropy, education, and religion. The teacher and the pastor must be identified with the people of a definite district. No one must be an absentee spiritual landlord

who draws his revenue from an office, but does not give his whole life to the people of his field.

Another principle on which our author insisted was that a numerous ministry, clerical and lay, must be provided for these neglected districts of cities. The hen's brood must not be too large for her wings to cover with protection, warmth, and maternal care. The flock must not be so large that the shepherd cannot call each sheep by name. The voice of the stranger will they not follow. Hence the great significance of the army of Sunday-school teachers whom Chalmers boldly defended against the "moderates"—the "ice-cream of society," who raised a fashionable outcry of disdain against these "methodistical" schemes. In our modern urban churches, especially among the poor, we are learning the necessity of having assistant pastors, visitors, nurses, deaconesses, missionaries, Bible readers, and voluntary teachers. The pastor of a large congregation in a parish of several thousand souls is discouraged and dismayed to see the thoughtless, impulsive and tempted straying away from the fold, and he utterly unable to watch over them personally, when a single wise word from a friend, at the right moment, might win them back to safety and honor.

Chalmers established what would now be called "institutional" churches. He recognized the solidarity of human interests. To him the day-school, the savings-bank, the library, the sociable assembly were ministrations which the Church owed to those whose lives were bare and meagrely supplied with spiritual goods.

Social Settlements.—The social settlement movement

owes much to the teaching and work of Chalmers. In charity, education, and evangelization his "principle of locality" or neighborhood relationship, was dominant and directive. He also urged the importance of actual residence of the spiritual leader among the people of a neighborhood, so that they may be actually and sympathetically in touch with all the factors which affect the people.

The Influence of Chalmers on the Curriculum of Theological Seminaries.—The teaching opportunity of the Church is great beyond calculation. While the common school has many advantages, the Church has access to the public mind and heart in a multitude of ways peculiarly its own. It is true that the newspaper, the library, the lecture, the reading-room, and the club have absorbed much of the intellectual life, and that the pulpit no longer has that monopoly of attention and that singular authority which it once enjoyed. The spiritual interests of society are more varied and divided than in any former age. We must also make allowance for the facts of scepticism, anti-clerical feeling, and a lower estimate of the saving efficacy of rites and ceremonies.

But, after making all fair admissions, it remains true that the ministry of the Church holds professional leadership which involves responsibility of the highest order. The decay of unquestioning obedience to dogmatic authority really marks an advance in the real influence of the clergy. Since they are aware that they cannot rely upon the unthinking acceptance of anything ordained lips may chance to utter, the preacher and pastor must himself value more highly the nobler evidences of right to

a hearing, as character, learning, and wisdom. This new requirement tends to produce a higher type of man and of service. The indolent, selfish, ignorant parson becomes obsolete. The enterprising, devoted servant of the best life of the people is nearer the hearts of all than he could be if his office and his garb marked him off as a ghostly visitant from a distant and shadowy world. The ministry must minister, or it denies the faith, and it is unworthy of the title. The pastor must earn his salary by real service.

This being admitted, the conscientious and consecrated pastor comes upon a very perplexing problem: What is his social function, and, therefore, what is his duty? He is a herald of the Gospel, first of all, through all, above all, or he is nothing but an intruder and pretender. This he is by the call of God in his own soul, by the solemn vows of ordination, and by the reasonable expectation of the Church. This he is by the social law which requires a man to specialize his activity and make himself an efficient workman in a single field for which he is especially adapted by nature, and for which he has directly fitted himself by education.

At the same time, all can see that this Gospel has a universal application; that it has a spirit which should pervade all social activities, a law which should dominate all conduct; and that the preacher and pastor must make his flock constantly aware of the supreme right of religion and its ethical code to govern all men in all things. The special function of the preacher and pastor touches universal law and supreme principles of love, justice, good-

ness, social order, human welfare, and every element and application of these.

If the minister neglects the central and vital essence of religion he descends to the level of the newspaper and the politician; he dissipates his physical and spiritual energies; his professional studies become superficial and unfruitful; his sermons lack point, fervency, and spiritual power; his pastoral hours are wasted away along trickling streams in endless committee meetings and desk drudgery, with activities for which persons of other temperament and training are better fitted; his public utterances smack of the charlatan.

If, on the other hand, he construes his mission narrowly, if he confines his studies and teaching absolutely to the development of exegesis of texts and the enforcement of a theological system; if he shows that he has no sympathy with the daily and hourly struggle of men for bread and culture; if the school, the hospital, the laboratory, the caucus, the council, the legislature, the army and navy, the recreations and the domestic conduct are utterly indifferent to him, unknown to him; if ecclesiastical elite and synods and conferences and meetings are all the world to him then he becomes a mere professional chaplain, and he loses his manhood, his humanity. As a recluse he may be useful by contributing to theological learning. As a devoted churchman he may have a large congregation and a growing membership. He may win a denominational reputation for being "successful." But is he wholly a disciple of Christ? Has he done his full duty to mankind?

In reconciling these stubborn contradictions and solving these perplexities of conscience, the work of Chalmers offers important help. This eminent pastor and preacher saw the difficulty, was conscious of the dangers on both sides, and he reflected and wrote much on the solution of the problem.

Chalmers first of all made central truths central in his studies, teaching, and pastoral labors. He discriminated between essentials and subordinate elements. As a Christian leader he placed his Lord in the focus of every light-beam of sermon and action. All conduct was to be judged by this perfect standard; all organizations must have Christ's will for their informing purpose; all sermons must carry the soul into the divine presence. He early found this regulative principle, and it brought harmony, order, system, and cumulative power into his life and writings.

Chalmers knew, as an economist, the social significance of division of labor in society, and he pleaded for leisure for clergymen, and immunity from the unreasonable secular claims of urban life. He resented the demands made in his day upon city pastors for municipal and other official clerical services which could be better done by persons of technical training for the task. In his plans of poor relief he was careful to make a division of labor between almoners of material relief and spiritual counsellors and guides.

But, having thus protected the ministry from dissipation and diversion, he also urged the principle that the preacher should study social relations and social duties,

and the method by which religion can sway and direct the life of the people in daily life. It is a small thing if the minister controls the acts of people during the hour of formal ceremony and worship on one day, if they are not made to see and feel that all days and all activities are subject to the same law.

Arnold of Rugby said: "It is clear that in whatever it is our duty to act, those matters also it is our duty to study." Wisely or foolishly, helpfully or hurtfully, the pastor must act not only in respect to the poor and the vicious, but also in respect to the moral discipline of the rich and the powerful. Therefore, he ought to study the best that is known, that he may perform his duty in the best light. He is sure to influence education, because the Church owns schools, colleges, and immense endowments. He must deal with religious instruction, and he must study the aims and laws of pedagogy, science, and art, and the social requirements of the age in respect to higher culture.

The famous "Astronomical Discourses" and the "Commercial Discourses" are examples of the way in which the eminent Scotch preacher at once gave instruction and turned this information into parables of the highest spiritual life. Whether other men should attempt a similar task depends very much on the contents of their minds.

Chalmers was a pioneer in the movement to introduce social studies into the curriculum of training of pastors. He was not absolutely the first. The Bible is full of historical materials and of practical treatment of social re-

lations and duties. Some of the early church fathers had no fear of becoming "unspiritual" by giving heed to domestic and civil institutions. Augustine was a man of profound devotional life, and his "City of God" is a social philosophy, an attempt to interpret Jesus's idea of the Kingdom of God to the men of his age. The chief theologian of the Middle Ages, Thomas Aquinas, presents a system of economics, politics, and social ethics. His social writings are authoritatively commended by popes of this century to the Roman Catholic clergy, and they are drawing the entire body of these ecclesiastics into touch with the "labor movement."

Pietism fled from a perishing and hateful world. Chalmers thought real piety should stay at its post of duty in the world, fight its evils, enhance its good, with the fervor of pietism, the exactness of orthodoxy, and the devotion of martyrs. He was a living proof and example that a minister may have all these qualities and also be acquainted with the essential doctrines of contemporary social science. He urged upon all ministers the duty and advantage of these studies.

In his preface to the "Political Economy," Chalmers wrote: "Political Economy, though not deemed an essential branch of education for churchmen, touches very closely, notwithstanding, on certain questions, in which both the interest and the duty of ecclesiastics are deeply concerned. The questions of pauperism and of a Religious Establishment, though no others could be specified, would of themselves justify a reference to the lessons and principles of this science, even in a theological course.

. . . Some of the text in this volume was recently delivered in lectures to the students of the Theological Hall in Edinburgh. We gladly transfer them from the chair to the press, were it for no other reason than to relieve our academic work, in all time coming, even from the semblance of aught that is extra-professional."

There is thus a tone of half apology in these words and in the note: "It may be right to mention that all which we did deliver upon this subject was in a separate lectureship of one hour in the week, distinct from the regular lessons of the theological course, though preparatory to our views on the treatment of pauperism, and other questions in parish economics which enter largely into the duties and attentions of the pastoral care. It, besides, formed the natural precursor to another lectureship which we have begun, on the methods and the machinery of Christian education."

The apologetic tone may be excused in the light of his example in giving so wide an interpretation to "parish economics." The following words deepen the impression of his valuation of social studies: "We cannot, however, bid adieu to political economy, without an earnest recommendation of its lessons to all those who enter upon the ecclesiastical vocation. They are our churchmen, in fact, who could best carry the most important of these lessons into practical effect. If sufficiently enlightened on the question of pauperism, they might, with the greatest ease, in Scotland, clear away this moral leprosy from their respective parishes. And, standing at the head of Christian education, they are the lone effect-

ual dispensers of all those civil and economical blessings which would follow in its train."

Even now his earnest prayer has place and meaning: "May God of His infinite mercy grant that whatever the coming changes in the state and history of these nations may be, they shall not be the result of a sweeping and headlong anarchy, but rather, in the pacific march of improvement, may they anticipate this tremendous evil and avert it from our borders. There is a general impression upon all spirits that something must be done. But, to be done well, it must not be by the hand of violence, but by the authority of legitimate power, under the guidance of principle; by a government having both the wisdom and righteousness to direct and the strength to execute."

THE

CHRISTIAN AND CIVIC ECONOMY OF LARGE TOWNS

[ABRIDGED]

BY

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PREFACE

THERE is a great deal of philanthropy afloat in this our day. At no period, perhaps, in the history of the human mind did a desire for doing good, so earnest, meet a spirit of inquiry so eager, after the best and likeliest methods of carrying the desire into accomplishment. Amid all that looks dark and menacing, in the present exhibitions of society, this, at least, must be acknowledged—that never was there a greater quantity of thought embarked on those speculations which, whether with Christian or merely economic writers, have the one common object of promoting the worth and comfort of our species.

It must be confessed, at the same time, that much of this benevolence, and more particularly, when it aims at some fulfilment by a combination of many individuals, is rendered abortive for want of a right direction. Were the misleading causes to which philanthropy is exposed, when it operates among a crowded assemblage of human beings, fully understood, then would it cease to be a paradox, . . . why there should either be a steady progress of wretchedness in our land in the midst of its charitable institutions, or a steady progress of profligacy in the midst of its churches, and Sabbath schools, and manifold reclaiming societies.

The author of the following work has been much in the habit of comparing the habitudes of a city with those of a country population, and he cannot more fitly express its subject than by assigning to it the title of "The Christian and Civic Economy of Large Towns. . . ."

THE CHRISTIAN AND CIVIC ECONOMY OF LARGE TOWNS

VOLUME I

CHAPTER I

THE ADVANTAGE AND POSSIBILITY OF ASSIMILATING A TOWN TO A COUNTRY PARISH

THERE are two classes of writers whose prevailing topics stand intimately connected with the philosophy of human affairs, but who, in almost all their habitudes of thinking, have hitherto maintained an unfortunate distance from each other. There are political economists, who do not admit Christianity as an element into their speculations; and there are Christian philanthropists who do not admit political science as an element into theirs. The former very generally regard the professional subject of the latter, if not with contempt, at least with unconcern; and the latter as generally regard the professional subject of the former with a somewhat sensitive kind of prejudice, bordering upon disapprobation and dislike. It is thus that two classes of public laborers, who, with a mutual respect and understanding, might have, out of their united contributions, rendered a most important offering to so-

ciety, have, in fact, each in the prosecution of their own separate walk, so shut out the light and so rejected the aid which the other could have afforded, as either, in many instances, to have merely amused the intellectual public with inert and unproductive theory, on the one hand, or as to have misled the practically benevolent public into measures of well-meaning but mischievous and ill-directed activity on the other.

And, indeed, it is only in the later walks of political science that the aid of Christianity has obviously become of practical importance to her; nor did this aid appear to be at all requisite for the purpose of giving effect to her earlier speculations. Till within these last fifteen years, the great topic of inquiry among our abstract politicians was the theory of commerce, and the moral habit of the laboring classes, as founded on their religion, did not enter as an element or as a component part into that theory. . . . But the case is widely different with respect to the later contributions which have been rendered to this science. We allude more especially to the essay of Mr. Malthus, whose theory of population, had it been present to the mind of Mr. Smith, would, we think, have modified certain of those doctrines and conclusions which he presented to the world in his essay on the "Theory of Commerce." It is true that government, by her obtrusive interferences, has put the country into a worse condition, in respect of her population, than it would have been in had this branch of its economy been also left to itself. There are certain artificial encouragements to population which government ought

never to have sanctioned, and which it were the wisdom of government, with all prudent and practicable speed, to abolish. There are certain bounties that the law has devised upon marriage, in every way as hurtful and impolitic as her bounties upon trade, and which it were greatly better for the interests of all classes, and more especially of the laboring classes, that she should forthwith recall. There is a way in which, by stepping beyond her province and attempting to provide for that which would have been more effectually provided for without her, by the strong principle of self-preservation, on the one hand, and the free but powerful sympathies of individual nature on the other; there is a way in which she has lulled the poor into improvidence and frozen the rich into apathy toward their wants and their sufferings, and this way it were surely better that she had never entered upon, and better now that she should retrace with all convenient expedition. Now all this may be done, and with a certain degree of benefit, even in the midst of an unchristian population. Their comfort would be advanced so far, merely by the principles of nature being restored to their unfettered operation; and this is desirable, even though we should fall short of that additional comfort which would accrue from the principles of Christianity being brought more prevalently among them than before. And thus it is a possible thing that government, acting exclusively in this temper and with the views of the wisdom of this world, may exert itself with beneficial influence on that great branch of political economy which relates to the population of

a state, just as she may on that other great branch of it which relates to the commerce of a state. . . .

But there is one wide and palpable distinction between the matter of commerce and the matter of population. Government may safely withdraw from the former concern altogether, and abandon it to the love of gain and the spirit of enterprise, and the sharp-sighted sagacity that guides almost all the pursuits of interest, and the natural securities for justice between man and man in society. . . . And it were also well, that government withdrew from the concern of ordinary pauperism altogether which stands so nearly associated with the question of population. She would in this way do much to call forth a resurrection of those providential habits which serve both to restrain the number and to equalize the comforts of our people; and she would also do much to bring out those otherwise checked and superseded sympathies that, in the flow of their kindly and spontaneous exercise, are more fitted to bind the community in gentleness together than all the legalized charities of our land. But though she may do thus much, she cannot do all, and there will still be left a mighty reversion of good that can only be achieved by the people themselves. For, though the unfettered principles of nature may suffice for carrying all that interest which is connected with the state of a country's commerce onward to the condition that is best and safest for the public weal, the mere principles of nature will not suffice for carrying the interest that is connected with the state of a country's population onward to the condition that is best and safest

for the public weal. . . . So long as profligacy remains the pressure in question will, though lessened in amount, remain along with it. So long as the sensual predominates over the reflective part of the human constitution will there be improvident marriages and premature families, and an overdone competition for subsistence, and a general inadequacy in the wages of labor to the fair rate of human enjoyment, and, in a word, all the disorder and discomfort of an excessive population. So long as there is generally a low and grovelling taste among the people, instead of an aspiring tendency toward something more in the way of comfort and cleanliness and elegance than is to be met with in the sordid habitations of a rude and demi-barbarous country, will they rush with precipitation into matrimony and care not how unable they are to meet its expenses, and forfeit the whole ease and accommodation of the future to the present ascendency of a blind and uncalculating impulse. . . . The tendency to excessive population can only find its thorough and decisive counteraction among the amended habits, and the moralized characters, and the exalted principles of the people themselves. . . . It is necessary to go forth among the people, and there to superinduce the principles of an efficient morality on the mere principles of nature, and there to work a transformation of taste and of character, and there to deliver lessons which of themselves will induce a habit of thoughtfulness that must insensibly pervade the whole system of a man's desires and doings, making him more a being of reach and intellect and anticipation than he was formerly—raising

the whole tone of his mind and infusing into every practical movement, along with the elements of passion and interest, the elements of duty and of wisdom and of self-estimation.

It is thus that the disciples of political science, however wisely they may speculate upon this question, are, if without the element of character among the general population, in a state of impotency as to the practical effect of their speculation. So long as the people remain either depraved or unenlightened, the country will never attain a healthful condition in respect of one of the great branches of her policy. This is an obstacle which stands uncontrollably opposed to the power of every other expedient for the purpose of mitigating the evils of a redundant population; and, till this be removed, legislators may devise and economists may demonstrate as they will, they want one of the data indispensable to the right solution of a problem which, however clear in theory, will, upon trial, mock the vain endeavors of those who overlook the moral principles of man, or despise the mysteries of that faith which can alone inspire them.

It is thus that our political writers, if at all honestly desirous of obtaining a fulfilment for their own speculation, should look toward the men who are fitted to expatiate among the people in the capacity of their most acceptable and efficient moralists. It is evident that they themselves are not the best adapted for such a practical movement through a community of human beings. It is not by any topic or any demonstration of theirs that we can at all look for a general welcome and admittance

among families. Let one of their number, for example, go forth with the argument of Malthus, or any other of the lessons of political economy, and that for the purpose of enlightening the practice and observation of his neighborhood. The very first reception that he met with would, in all likelihood, check the farther progress of this moral and benevolent adventure, and stamp upon it all the folly and all the fruitlessness of Quixotism. People would laugh, or wonder, or be offended, and a sense of the utterly ridiculous would soon attach itself to this expedition and lead him to abandon it. Now, herein lies the great initial superiority which the merely Christian has over the merely civil philanthropist. He is armed with a topic of ready and pertinent introduction with which he may go round a population and come into close and extensive contact with all the families. Let his errand be connected with religion, and, even though a very obscure and wholly unsanctioned individual, may he enter within the precincts of nearly every household and not meet with one act of rudeness or resistance during the whole of his progress. Should he only, for example, invite their young to his Sabbath school, he, with this for his professed object, would find himself in possession of a passport upon which, and more especially among the common ranks of society, he might step into almost every dwelling-place and engage the inmates in conversations of piety, and leave at least the sensations of cordiality and gratitude behind him, and pave the way for successive applications of the same influence, and secure this acknowledgment in favor of his subject, that it is worthy

of being proposed on one side, and worthy of being entertained and patiently listened to on the other. It is not of his final success that we are now speaking. It is of his advantageous outset. . . .

It would save a world of misconception were it kept distinctly in mind that, for the purpose of giving effect to the lessons of the economist, it is not necessary for him who labors in the gospel vineyard, either to teach or even so much as to understand these lessons. Let him simply confine himself to his own strict and peculiar business; let him labor for immortality alone; let his single aim be to convert and to christianize, and, as the result of prayer and exertion, to succeed in depositing with some the faith of the New Testament, so as that they shall hold forth to the esteem and the imitation of many the virtues of the New Testament, and he does more for the civil and economical well-being of his neighborhood than he ever could do by the influence of all secular demonstration. . . . It were worse than ridiculous, and it most assuredly is not requisite for him, to become the champion of any economic theory with the principle of which he should be constantly infusing either his pulpit or his parochial ministrations. His office may be upheld in the entire aspect of its sacredness, and the main desire and prayer of his heart toward God in behalf of his brethren may be that they should be saved, and the engrossment of his mind with the one thing needful may be as complete as was that of the apostle who determined to know nothing among his hearers save Jesus Christ and Him crucified; and yet, such is the fulness of the blessing of

the gospel with which he is fraught, that while he renders the best possible service to the converts whom, under the Spirit of God, he has gained to its cause, he also, in the person of those converts, renders the best possible contribution to the temporal good of society. It is enough that they have been rescued from the dominion of sensuality; it is enough that they have become disciples of that book which, while it teaches them to be fervent in spirit, teaches them also to be not slothful in business; it is enough that the Christian faith has been formed with such power in their hearts as to bring out the Christian morals into visible exemplification upon their history; it is enough that the principle within them, if it do not propagate its own likeness in others, can at least, like the salt to which they have been compared, season a whole vicinity with many of its kindred and secondary attributes. There is not a more familiar exhibition in humble life than that alliance, in virtue of which a Christian family is almost sure to be a well-conditioned family. And yet its members are utterly unversant either in the maxims or in the speculations of political science. They occupy the right place in a rightly constituted and well-going mechanism; but the mechanism itself is what they never hear of and could not comprehend. Their Christian adviser never reads them a lesson from the writings of any economist, and yet the moral habit to which the former has been the instrument of conducting them is that which brings them into a state of practical conformity with the soundest and most valuable lessons which the latter can devise. . . .

If we revert to the habit of the last generation in Scotland, which is still fresh in the remembrance of many who are now alive, we shall find an ample verification of all these remarks. At that time Malthus had not written, and his speculations had little more than an embryo existence in the pages of Wallace; and certain it is that in the minds of our solid, regular, and well-doing peasantry it had no existence at all. It was acted upon, but without being at all counted upon. It was one of the cherished and domestic decencies of a former age transmitted from every matron to her daughters—not to marry without a costly and creditable provision; and the delay of years was often incurred in the mighty work of piling together the whole *materiel* of a most bulky and laborious preparation, and the elements of future comfort and future respectability behooved to be accumulated to a very large extent ere it was lawful, or at least reputable, to enter upon the condition of matrimony. And thus the moral preventive check of our great economist was in full and wholesome operation long before it was offered by him to public notice in the shape of a distinct and salutary principle. . . . Not till we recall the Christianity shall we ever recall the considerate sobriety, the steady, equalized comfort, the virtuous independence of a generation, the habit and the memory of which are so fast departing away from us. . . .

So much for the prevailing tendency of the civil to underrate or disregard the labors of the Christian philanthropist. But there is no less prevailing a tendency, on the part of the latter, to neglect many of the principles

and to underrate many of the propositions of the former. It is certainly to be regretted that many of our most pious and even our most profound theologians should be so unfurnished as they are with the conceptions of political economy. But it is their active resistance to some of its clearest and most unquestionable principles, it is their blindly sentimental dislike of a doctrine which stands on the firm basis of arithmetic, it is their misrepresentation of it as hostile to the exercise of our best feeling, when, in fact, all its hostility is directed against such perverse and unfortunate arrangements as have served to chill and to counteract the sympathies of our nature; it is the dogmatism of their strenuous asseverations against that which experience and demonstration are ever obtruding upon the judgment as irrefragable truth; it is this which is mainly to be regretted, for it has enlisted the whole of their high and deserved influence on the side of institutions pernicious to society; and what, perhaps, is still worse, it has led a very enlightened class in our land to imagine a certain poverty of understanding as inseparable from religious zeal, thus bringing down our Christian laborers from that estimation which, on their own topic, so rightfully belongs to them, and deducting from the weight of that professional testimony which it were the best interest of all classes most patiently to listen to and most respectfully to entertain.

But the mischief which has thus been inflicted on the good of humanity is not to be compared with the still deadlier mischief of a certain error which has received the utmost countenance and support from a large class

of religionists. What we allude to is their distaste toward all kinds of external machinery for the furtherance of any Christian enterprise, founded on their misapplication of an undoubted doctrine, that all the ebbs and all the revivals of Christianity are primarily to be traced to the alternations of a direct influence from heaven. They look, and they rightly look, to the Spirit of God as the agent of every prosperous revolution in the Christianity of our land. . . . It were folly to think that by the mere erection of a material framework the cause of Christianity can be advanced by a single hair-breadth, should there be a withholding of that special and sanctifying grace. . . . And hence with many there is a total indolence and unconcern as to all outward arguments, and everything like a visible apparatus appears insignificant in their eyes; and with something like the complacency of one who fancies himself in possession of the recondite principle of a given operation do they view with contempt all that man can do externally and with his hands for the purpose of achieving it. And thus do they hold in a kind of ineffable disdain the proposal of building more churches for the increase of Christianity in our land. And this is only one out of many instances in which, under a sense of the utter impotency of all mechanism, they would restrain human activity from putting itself forth on any palpable subject, and would sit in a sort of mystic and expectant quietism till there come down upon us from the skies the visitation of that inspiring energy which is to provide for all and to do all. . . .

[Examples of the use of means in all ages of the Church are given, from Apostolic times down to the schools of Scotland.]

In this we see the good of what may be called a material organization. It survives all the ebbs and alternations of the spirit which gave it birth, and who can fail to perceive that, in virtue of its existence, when this spirit reappears in the country, it finds channels for a readier and more abundant access into all the families than it would do in a country where there was no parochial endowment and no regular or universal habit of scholarship among the population? . . .

We hold the possibility, and we cannot doubt the advantage of assimilating a town to a country parish. We think that the same moral regimen which, under the parochial and ecclesiastical system of Scotland, has been set up, and with so much effect, in her country parishes, may, by a few simple and attainable processes, be introduced into the most crowded of our cities, and with as signal and conspicuous an effect on the whole habit and character of their population. . . . So that, while the profligacy which obtains in every crowded and concentrated mass of human beings is looked upon by many a philanthropist as one of those helpless and irreclaimable distempers of the body politic for which there is no remedy, do we maintain that there are certain practicable arrangements which, under the blessing of God, will stay this growing calamity, and would, by the perseverance of a few years, land us in a purer and better generation.

One most essential step toward so desirable an assimi-

lation in a large city parish is a numerous and well-appointed agency. The assimilation here does not lie in the external framework; for, in a small country parish the minister alone, or with a very few coadjutors of a small session, may bring the personal influence of his kind and Christian attentions to bear upon all the families. Among the ten thousand of the city parish this is impossible; and therefore, what he cannot do but partially and superficially in his own person must, if done substantially, be done in the person of others. And he, by dividing his parish into small manageable districts, and assigning one or more of his friends, in some capacity or other, to each of them, and vesting them with such a right either of superintendence or of inquiry as will always be found to be gratefully met by the population, and so raising a ready intermedium of communication between himself and the inhabitants of his parish, may at length attain an assimilation in point of result to a country parish, though not in the means by which he arrived at it. . . . Out of the simple elements of attention and advice and civility and good-will conveyed through the tenements of the poor by men a little more elevated in rank than themselves, a far more purifying and even more gracious operation can be made to descend upon them than ever will be achieved by any other of the ministrations of charity. . . .

In a manufacturing town . . . the poor and the wealthy stand more disjoined from each other. It is true they often meet, but they meet more on the arena of contest than on a field where the patronage and custom

of the one party are met by the gratitude and good-will of the other. . . . We do not aim at the most distant reflection against the manufacturers of our land; but it must be quite obvious, from the nature of the case, that their intercourse with the laboring classes is greatly more an intercourse of collision, and greatly less an intercourse of kindliness, than is that of the higher orders in such towns as Bath, or Oxford, or Edinburgh. In this way there is a mighty unfilled space interposed between the high and low of every large manufacturing city, in consequence of which they are mutually blind to the real cordialities and attractions which belong to each of them, and a resentful feeling is apt to be fostered, either of disdain or defiance, which it will require all the expedients of an enlightened charity effectually to do away. Nor can we guess at a likelier or a more immediate arrangement for this purpose than to multiply the agents of Christianity among us, whose delight it may be to go forth among the people on no other errand than that of pure good-will, and with no other ministrations than those of respect and tenderness.

There is one lesson that we need not teach, for experience has already taught it, and that is, the kindly influence which the mere presence of a human being has upon his fellows. Let the attention bestowed upon another be the genuine emanation of good-will, and there is only one thing more to make it irresistible. The readiest way of finding access to a man's heart is to go into his house and there to perform the deed of kindness, or to acquit ourselves of the wonted and the looked-for acknowledgment.

By putting ourselves under the roof of a poor neighbor we in a manner put ourselves under his protection; we render him for a time our superior; we throw our reception on his generosity, and we may be assured that it is a confidence which will almost never fail us. . . . This is the home-walk in which is earned, if not a proud, at least a peaceful, popularity—the popularity of the heart, the greetings of men who, touched even by the cheapest and easiest services of kindness, have nothing to give out but their wishes of kindness back again; but, in giving these, have crowned such pious attentions with the only popularity that is worth aspiring after—the popularity that is won in the bosom of families and at the side of death-beds.

[The author protests against the custom of civil authorities of that day in Scotland who crowded upon city pastors a great many distracting clerical duties which naturally belonged to secular offices of government. He urges that this custom interfered with the efficient performance of parish duties; that it exhausted the pastor with a round of petty tasks; that it interfered with that scholarly leisure which is necessary for the development of a strong theological literature.]

In the country there is time for the prosecution of a lofty and laborious walk; but there is not the excitement. In the town there is the excitement; but, under the progress of such a system as we have attempted to expose, there will not be the time. There is a constant withdrawment of the more conspicuous members of our establishment from the solitude of their first parishes; but

it is withdrawment into a vortex which stifles and destroys them. Those towns which, with a few most simple and practicable reformations, might be the instruments of sustaining the cause of theology and of sending abroad over the face of our country a most vigorous and healthful impulse toward the prosecution of theological learning, may, under that yearly process of distinction which is now going forward, depress the whole literature of our profession. . . . And we have only to look to the last fifty years and think of the new direction to our habits which has taken place in that period, in order to compute how soon our national establishment may, by the simple cause of its ministers being turned to the drudgery of other services, be shorn of her best and most substantial glories, and how soon that theology of which she is the appointed guardian may come to sink both in vigor and illustration beneath the spirit and literature and general philosophy of the times.

Should any reader think that we have drawn the above picture with too faithful, or even with too strong, a hand, we ask him, further, to think that it is such a picture as, by its very exhibition, may scare away the realities which it anticipates. The case, we are persuaded, requires only to be understood, and then it will be provided for, since the restoration of the clergy to their own proper and peculiar influence over the hosts of a city population must appear both to the Christian and the general philanthropist one of the most important of our national desiderata.

CHAPTER II

ON THE INFLUENCE OF LOCALITY IN TOWNS

We do not know how the matter is ordered in London; but in the second-rate towns of our empire it will often be found that when a philanthropic society is formed in them for any assigned object, it spreads its operations over the whole field of the congregated population. This holds generally true both of the societies for relief and of the societies for instruction. Take a clothing society, or an old man's friend society, or a destitute sick society, as examples of the former; or take a Sabbath-school society as an example of the latter; and in by far the greater number of instances will it be seen that instead of concentrating their exertions upon one district or department of the city, they expatiate at large and over the face of its entire territory, recognizing no other boundary than that which lies indefinitely but fully beyond the final outskirts of the compact and contiguous dwelling-places. . . .

[Usually a Sabbath-school draws its teachers from all parts of the city and children from many localities. The better way would be to assign a small and definite area to a teacher and make him feel responsible for all the persons within this limited district. The advantage and charm of this intensive and thorough method can be realized only by those who have given it an adequate trial.]

The first effect of it which falls to be considered is that which it has upon the teacher. . . . He, with a select and appropriate vineyard thus lying before him, will feel himself more powerfully urged than when under the common arrangement, to go forth among its families. . . . When the subject on which he is to operate thus offers itself to his contemplation in the shape of one unbroken field or of one entire and continuous body, it acts as a more distinct and imperative call upon him to go out upon the enterprise. He will feel a kind of property in the families; and the very circumstance of a material limit around their habitations serves to strengthen this impression by furnishing to his mind a sort of association with the hedges and the landmarks of property. . . . There is a very great difference in respect of its practical influence, between a task that is indefinite and a task that is clearly seen to be overtakable. The one has the effect to paralyze, the other to quicken, exertion. . . . It serves most essentially to spirit on his undertaking when, by every new movement, one feels himself to be drawing sensibly nearer to the accomplishment of it. . . . He can go over his families, too, with far less expense of locomotion than under the common system of Sabbath-schools, and, for the same reason, can he more fully and frequently reiterate his attentions, and it will charm him onward to find that he is sensibly translating himself into a stricter and kinder relationship with the people of his district; and, if he have a taste for cordial intercourse with the fellows of his own nature, he will be gladdened and encouraged by this growing familiarity

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with them all, and thus will he turn the vicinity which he has chosen into a home-walk of many charities; and, recognized as its moral benefactor, will his kindness and his judgment and his Christianity be put forth, with a well-earned and well-established influence, in behalf of a grateful population. . . .

The next is its effect in calling out the attendance of the taught. The invitation comes upon them with far greater power when it is to attend the weekly lessons which are given out in the close vicinity of their own habitations than were it to attend at some distant place where children are assembled from all quarters of the city. . . . There is also much in the juxtaposition of the taught to one another. This brings what may be called the gregarious principle into fuller play. What children will not do singly they will do with delight and readiness in a flock. . . .

The third peculiar benefit of this local arrangement is its effect on the population of the district. . . . One great desideratum in large towns is acquaintanceship among the contiguous families. And to promote this every arrangement, in itself right, should be promoted which brings out the indwellers of one vicinity to one common place of repair, and brings upon them one common ministration. . . .

[The ordinary system lacks these advantages.]

Under a local system the teachers move toward the people. Under a general system such of the people as are disposed to Christianity move toward them. To esti-

mate the comparative effect of these two, take the actual state of every mixed and crowded population, where there must be many among whom this disposition is utterly extinguished. The question is, How shall the influence of a Sabbath-school be brought most readily and most abundantly into contact with their families? Which of the two parties, the teacher, or those to be taught, should make the first advances to such an approximation? To meet this question, let it ever be remembered that there is a wide and mighty difference between the wants of our physical and those of our moral and spiritual nature. In proportion to our want of food is our desire for food; but it is not so with our want of knowledge, or virtue, or religion. The more destitute we are of these last, the more dead we are to any inclination for them. A general system of Sabbath-schooling may attract toward it all the predisposition that there is for Christian instruction, and yet leave the majority as untouched and as unawakened as it found them. . . . It is both a possible thing that schools may multiply under a general system and that out of the resources of a mighty population an overflowing attendance may be afforded to each of them, while an humble fraction of the whole is all that is overtaken; and below the goodly superficies of a great apparent stir and activity may an unseen structure of baser materials deepen and accumulate underneath, so as to furnish a solution of the fact that with an increase of Christian exertion among us there should, at one and the same time, be an increase of heathenism. . . .

The schools, under a general system, are so many cen-

tres of attraction for all the existing desire that there is toward Christianity; . . . the schools under a local system are so many centres of emanation from which a vivifying influence is actively propagated through a dead and putrid mass. . . . The general system draws around it the young of our more decent and reputable families. . . . It is the pride of the latter or local system, while it refuses not these, that it also fetches out from their obscurities the very poorest and most profligate of children. It may have a painful encounter at the outset with the filth, and the raggedness, and the other rude and revolting materials which it has so laboriously excavated from those mines of depravity that lie beneath the surface of common observation. But it may well be consoled with the thought that while much good has been done by its predecessor which, we trust, it is on the eve of supplanting, it holds in its own hands the materials of a far more glorious transformation.

[Crime and disorder may be increasing side by side with the striking advance of the Church and of culture. The methods of attraction display victories in one quarter, while, in the absence of methods of emanation and pervasion, the lower quarters are sinking into deeper depravity.]

In these circumstances do we know of no expedient by which this woful degeneracy can be arrested and recalled, but an actual search and entry upon the territory of wickedness. A mere signal of invitation is not enough. . . . We must do with the near what we

are doing with the distant world. We do not expect to Christianize the latter by messages of entreaty from the regions of paganism. But we send our messages to them. Neither do we give a roving commission to the bearer, but assign to each of them their respective stations in that field, which is the world. . . . There must just be as aggressive a movement in the one case as in the other. There is not the same physical distance, but there is nearly the same moral distance, to be described with both. . . .

Any one, or, at most, two philanthropists, may set forth upon such an experiment. They will soon, in the course of their inquiries, be enabled to verify the actual state of our city families, and, at the same time, their openness to the influence of a pervading operation. Let them, for this purpose, make their actual entrance upon a district which they have previously chalked out as the ground of their benevolent enterprise; and it were better that it should be in some poor and neglected part of the city. Let the one introduce the other to every family, and on the simple errand that he meant to set up a Sabbath-school, to be just at hand, and for the vicinity around him. With no other manner than that which Christian kindness would dictate, and just such questions as are consistent with the respect which every human being should entertain for another, we promise him not merely a civil, but a cordial reception in almost every house, and a discreet answer to all his inquiries. The first thing which, in all likelihood, will meet his observation, is the mighty remainder of good that is left for him to do

amid the number and exertion of the general Sabbath-schools that are on every side of him. It may be otherwise in some few accidental districts; but, speaking generally, he will assemble a sufficient school out of a population of three hundred. Parents of all characters will accept his proposition with gratitude. And if, on his first meeting with their children in some apartment of the district, he should be disappointed by the non-attendance of some he was counting on, a few calls of inquiry on the subject will generally at length secure the point of their attendance; and, by following up every case of absence with a week-day inquiry of the parents, he will secure the regularity of it, and thus may he bring his moral and personal influence into contact with their young for a few hours of every recurring Sabbath, and also keep up an influence through the whole week by the circulation of books from a small library attached to his institution. It will prove a mighty accession to the good that he is doing if he hold frequent intercourse with the families. . . .

A few months of perseverance will thoroughly engage him to the cause he has undertaken. He will feel a comfort in this style of philanthropy which he does not feel in the bustle and distraction of manifold societies. He will enjoy both the unity and the effectiveness of his doings. And instead of pacing, as he does now, among dull committees, and perplexing himself among the questions of a large and laborious superintendence, will he expatiate, without encumbrance, upon his own chosen field, and rejoice in putting forth his immediate hand

on the work of reclaiming it from that neglected waste of ignorance and improvidence by which it is surrounded.

To be effective in such a walk of benevolence as this it is not necessary to be rich.

[The visitor might build up a school, in the absence of free public schools, by soliciting small contributions for a teacher. He might train the people to thrift by collecting their pennies and forming a fund against times of need.]

The weapons of this warfare are advice, and friendship, and humanity at all times ready, without [being] at any time impertinent, and the well-earned confidence which is ever sure to follow in the train of tried and demonstrated worth—these, when wielded for a long time by the same individual on the same contiguous families, will work an effect of improvement which never can be attained by all the devices and labors of ordinary committeeship.

There are so many philanthropists in this our day that if each of them who is qualified were to betake himself in his own line of usefulness to one given locality, it would soon work a great and visible effect upon society. . . . But there is a temporary hindrance to it, in the prevailing spirit of the times. The truth is that a task so isolated as that which we are now prescribing does not suit with the present rage for generalizing. There is an appetite for designs of magnificence. There is an impatience of everything short of a universal scheme landing in a universal result. Nothing will serve but a mighty organization with the promise of mighty consequences;

and let any single person be infected with this spirit, and he may decline from the work of a single court or lane in a city as an object far too limited for his contemplation. He may like to share with others in the enterprise of subordinating a whole city to the power of some great and combined operation. And we may often have to deliver a man from this ambitious tendency ere we can prevail upon him to sit humbly and perseveringly down to his task; ere we can lead him to forget the whole and practically give himself to one of its particulars; ere we can satisfy him that, should he moralize one district of three hundred people, he will not have lived in vain; ere we can get him to pervade his locality and quit his speculation.

This spirit has restrained the march of philanthropy as effectually as, in other days, it did that of philosophy. In the taste for splendid generalities it was long ere the detail and the drudgery of experimental science were entered upon. There is a sound and inductive method of philanthropy as well as a sound and inductive method of philosophizing. A few patient disciples of the experimental school have constructed a far nobler and more enduring fabric of truth than all the old schoolmen put together could have reared. And could we prevail on those that are unwearied in well-doing, each to take his own separate slip or portion of the vast territory that lies before us and to go forth upon it with the one preparation of common-sense and common sympathy; and, resigning his more extended imaginations, actually to work with the materials that are put into his hand, we would,

in this inductive way of it, arrive at a far more solid as well as striking consummation than ever can be realized by any society of wide and lofty undertakings.

The individual who thus sits soberly down to a work that is commensurate with the real mediocrity of human powers will soon meet with much to reconcile him to the enterprise. He will not fail to contrast the impotency of every general management, in reference to the whole, with the efficacy of his own special management, in reference to a part. . . . He loses a splendid deception, and he gets, in exchange for it, a solid reality, and a reality, too, which will at length grow and brighten into splendor by the simple apposition of other districts to his own. . . .

There is an impatience on the part of many a raw and sanguine philanthropist for doing something great; and, akin to this, there is an impatience for doing that great thing speedily. They spurn the condition of drivelling among littles; and unless there be a redeeming magnificence in the whole operation, of which they bear a part, are there some who could not be satisfied with a humble and detached allotment in the great vineyard of human usefulness.

A Sabbath-school for one city parish has a greatly more limited aim than a Sabbath-school society for the whole of Scotland. And yet, in opposition to the maxim that union is power, would we strongly advise the managers of every parochial society to refuse every other alliance than that of good-will with any wider association; to maintain within its own limits the vitality and

spirit of a wholly independent existence; to resist every offered extension of its mechanism, and rather leave the contiguous parish to follow its example than lay upon it a chain of fellowship which will only damp the alacrity and impede the movements of both. Not that we at all admire the narrowness of an unsocial spirit which cares for nothing beyond the confines of its own territory. It is simply that we hold it to be bad moral tactics thus to extend the field of management, thus to bring a whole city or a whole province under one unwieldy jurisdiction, thus to weaken by dispersion the interest which we think is far more vivid and effective when concentrated upon one given locality, thus to exchange the kindliness of a small appropriated home for the cold lustre of a wider and more public management, thus to throw ourselves abroad, over an expanse of superficiality, instead of thoroughly pervading and filling up each of its subordinate sections. We have, in fact, somewhat of the same antipathy to a general society for matters spiritual that we have to a general session for matters temporal; and we are most thoroughly persuaded that the less we are linked and hampered with one another the more effective will be all our operations.

In the work of filling up a parish with Sabbath-schools we would recommend the local system in its purest form; that is, that a small separate district should be assigned to each teacher, and that it should no more be his practice to draw the young from all parts of the parish indiscriminately than to draw them from all parts of the city indiscriminately. There are many parishes in the

empire of a population that would require fifty teachers for their thorough cultivation; and the danger is that in the hurry of an ambitious desire to get up a complete apparatus there may be a rapidity, and a regardlessness of qualification in the admissions of new agency. It were greatly better that the promoters of such an undertaking should begin with one extremity of the ground upon which they have entered, cautiously provide for each department as they move onward toward the other extremity, and leave a portion for a time in an outfield state rather than precipitate the appointments or assign to any a larger allocation than he can comfortably or effectually pervade.

[A scheme for covering the whole city at once provokes dissension and ends in speechifying and neglect of practical work. A good example of right method is that of the Saltmarket Sabbath-school Society, which undertook labors in a population of 3,624 souls. It began with four teachers, and soon had pervaded the entire district and had 420 scholars in fourteen schools, more than one-ninth of all. Of the success of this district he says:]

We never witnessed so rapid a cultivation; and when, on visiting the school a few months after its establishment, we beheld the dress and decency of their exterior, and marked the general propriety of their manners, and observed the feeling that was evident in the replies of some, and the talent and promptitude that shone forth in the replies of many; when, along with all this, we were made to rejoice in the greetings of the assembled

parentage, and shared their triumph and satisfaction in the proficiency of their own offspring, whom, poor as they were, they, out of their own unaided resources, had so respectably arrayed; when we further reflected that the living scene before us was not made up of the scantlings of a whole city, but was formed by the compact population of one small but thoroughly explored vicinage, with our eyes open to what had thus been done by the moral force of care and kindness on the part of one individual, we could not miss the inference that, with a right distribution, it was in the power of a number of individuals to throw another aspect over the habit and character of another generation. . . .

It is not to the labors of those who are universalists in science that she stands indebted for her present solidity, or her present elevation, but to the separate labors of many, each occupying his own little field, and heaping, on the basis of former acquisitions, his own distinct and peculiar offering. And it is just so in philanthropy. The spirit of it has gone marvellously abroad among us of late years, but still clouded and misled by the bewildering glare which the fancy of ambitious man is apt to throw around his own undertakings. He would be the sole creator of a magnificent erection, rather than a humble contributor to it, among a thousand more, each as necessary and important as himself. And yet, would he only resign his speculations and give himself to the execution of a task to which his own personal faculties were adequate, he would meet with much to compensate the loss of those splendid delusions which have hitherto

engrossed him. There would be less of the glare of publicity, but there would be more of the kindliness of a quiet and sheltered home. . . . He could not, by his own solitary strength, advance the little stone into a great mountain, but the worth and efficacy of his labors will be sure to recommend them to the imitation of many, and the good work will spread by example from one individual and from one district to another; and, though he may be lost to observation, in the growing magnitude of the operations which surround him, yet will he rejoice even in his very insignificance, as the befitting condition for one to occupy among the many millions of the species to which he belongs; and it will be enough for him that he has added one part, however small, to the great achievement which can only be completed by the exertions of an innumerable multitude, and the fruit of which is to fill the whole earth.

CHAPTER III

APPLICATION OF THE PRINCIPLE OF LOCALITY IN TOWNS TO THE WORK OF A CHRISTIAN MINISTER

It is perhaps the best among all our more general arguments for a religious establishment in a country that the spontaneous demand of human beings for religion is far short of the actual interest which they have in it. This is not so with their demand for food and raiment, or any article which ministers to the necessities of our physical nature. The more destitute we are of these articles the greater is our desire after them. In every case where the want of anything serves to whet our appetite instead of weakening it, the supply of that thing may be left with all safety to the native and powerful demand for it among the people themselves. . . . It is wise in government to leave the care of the public good, wherever it can be left safely, to the workings of individual nature, and, saving for the administration of justice between man and man, it were better that she never put out her hand, either with a view to regulate or to foster any of the operations of common merchandise. . . .

[On this condition of a deep human interest in religion, without an imperative demand for it until the spir-

itual nature is aroused by missionary effort, he bases an argument for a state supported church. But he would not restrict the free activity of dissenters by law, and for these he asks tolerance.]

At the same time we hope that no restriction whatever will be laid on the zeal and exertion of dissenters, and that any legal disability under which they still labor will at length be done away. The truth is that we know not a better remedy against the temporary and incidental evils of an establishment than a free, entire, and unexcepted toleration; nor how an endowed church can be more effectually preserved, either from stagnation or decay, than by being ever stimulated and kept on the alert through the talent and energy, and even occasional malignity and injustice of private adventurers. . . .

In order that men may become Christians there must either be an obtruding of Christianity on the notice of the people, or the people must be waited for till they move themselves in quest of Christianity. We apprehend that the former, or what may be called the aggressive way of it, is the most effectual. Nature does not go forth in search of Christianity, but Christianity goes forth to knock at the door of nature, and, if possible, awaken her out of her sluggishness. This was the way of it at its first promulgation. It is the way of it in every missionary enterprise. . . .

[Here follows the conclusion, so alien to primitive and to American Christianity, that the government must be depended on, and not the Church, for the spiritual initiative in this missionary effort.]

In our last chapter we made a comparison between local and general Sabbath-schools. Now a church is, or easily might be, in effect, a local Sabbath-school. Its district is, or ought to be, the parish with which it stands nominally associated, and its sitters ought to be the inhabitants of that parish. . . .

The influence of locality may be resolved into two influences; first, that which operates on the agent to whom the locality is assigned; and, secondly, that which operates on the people who reside within the field of his undertaking.

In the first place, then, it is not so likely that a minister will go forth on his share of the population, when spread at random over the whole city, as when they lie within the limits of a space that is overtakeable. He feels an incitement to move in the latter way of it, which he does not feel when his attentions are dispersed over a wide and bewildering generality. He, under the one arrangement, may have a rare and rapid and transient intercourse with the individuals of a diffused multitude; but this can never ripen into solid acquaintanceship with more than a very few. Under the other arrangement he may, at a greatly less expense, attain to terms of confidence with some, and of familiarity with many. And it would add prodigiously to this operation were his hearers on the Sabbath also his parochial acquaintances through the week.

The second influence of locality is that by which the people obtain a more intense feeling of their relationship to their minister. It is incalculable how much this

last is promoted by the mere juxtaposition of the people to one another. . . . There is nothing fanciful in the charm which we thus ascribe to locality. It is the charm of tact and of experience. It is better when the people who live beside each other are under one common impression of good from their minister than when these same people live asunder from each other. It is not known how much that impression is heightened by sympathy. Did each of a thousand who attend a dramatic performance satisfy himself with reading the composition at home, the total impression among them were not half so powerful as when, within the infection of one another's feelings, they sit together at its representation in a theatre. This is, in part, due to the power of sensible exhibition in the acting. But it is also due, in great part, to the operation of sympathy. And when contiguous families hear the same minister on the Sabbath, or come within the scope of the same household attentions on other days, there is between them, through the week, a prolonged and often a cherished sympathy which, were the families widely apart in distant places of a town, would have no operation. . . . It would draw next-door families into closer and nearer relationship with each other, and shed a mild, moral lustre over many vicinities, now crowded with human beings, but desolate in respect of all those feelings which go to sweeten and solace human bosoms. It would, in fact, go a certain way to transplant into our larger towns the kindliness of select and limited intercourse, so that, even though the minister could be the visitant of as many

families, and the friend of as many individuals, on the general as on the local system, yet the very circumstance of their being scattered, instead of being contiguous, makes a heavy deduction from the amount of his influence upon them. . . .

But, after all, the argument of greatest strength for a strictly parochial system in towns is identical with the argument for a religious establishment all over the country. People will not be drawn in such abundance to Christianity by a mere process of attraction, as Christianity can be made to radiate upon them by a process of emanation. . . . It is not mere Sabbath preaching that will retain, or far less recall, a people to the ordinances of Christianity. It is not even this preaching, seconded by the most strenuous week-day attentions, to hearers lying thinly and confusedly scattered over a wide and fatiguing territory. With such a bare and general superintendence as this, many are the families that will fall out of notice; and there will be the breaking out of many intermediate spaces, in which there must grow and gather, every year, a wider alienation from all the habits of a country parish; and the minister, occupied with his extra-parochial congregation, will be bereft of all his natural influence over a locality which is but nominally his. The reciprocal influence of his Sabbath and week-day ministrations on each other is entirely lost under such an arrangement. The truth is, that let him move through his parish, he may not find so much as a hundred hearers within its limits out of more than ten times that number who attend upon him. . . . Un-

der the paralyzing influence of the present system it is not to be wondered at that the urgency for seats should have fallen so greatly in the rear of the increasing rate of population, and that the habit of attendance on any place of religious instruction whatever should have gone so wofully into desuetude, and that the feeble operation of waiting a demand, instead of stimulating, should be so incompetent to reclaim this habit; and that the laboring classes in towns should have become so generally alienated from the religious establishment of the land; and, what is worse than the desertion of establishments, that a fearful majority should be now forming, and likely to increase every year, who are not merely away from all churches, but so far away as to be beyond the supplementary operation of all meeting-houses, a majority that is fast thickening upon our hands, and who will be sure to return all the disorders of week-day profligacy upon the country, because that country has, in fact, abandoned them to the ever-plying incitements and opportunities of Sabbath profanation.

In a country parish the number who should be in attendance upon church is computed at one-half of the whole population. In towns, where the obstacle of distance is not to be overcome, a larger proportion than this is generally fixed upon. We think it, however, overrated at two-thirds, and shall therefore assign the intermediate fraction of five-eighths as the ratio which the church-going inhabitants of a town should bear to the total number of them.

[He takes a district of Glasgow for illustration. This district had a population of 10,304, of whom less than one-fifth attended church. He pays a tribute to the zeal of dissenters who helped to attract many who had neglected the established church. As to the social consequences of this neglect he proceeds to say:]

When we contemplate the magnitude of those suburb wastes, which have formed so rapidly around the metropolis and every commercial city of our land; when we think of the quantity of lawless spirit which has been permitted to ferment and to multiply there, afar from the contact of every softening influence, and without one effectual hand put forth to stay the great and the growing distemper; when we estimate the families which, from infancy to manhood, have been unvisited by any message from Christianity, and on whose consciences the voice of Him who speaketh the word that is from heaven has never descended, we cannot but charge that country, which, satisfied if it neutralize the violence, rears no preventive barrier against the vices of the people, with the guilt of inflicting upon itself moral if not a political suicide. . . .

[After reciting the story of failure in a district where a church was established and a series of able preachers came to deliver sermons at the people without parish ministrations, he adds:]

It is not with rare and extraordinary talent conferred upon a few, but with habits and principles which may

be cultivated by all, that are linked our best securities for the reformation of the world. This is a work which will mainly be done with every-day instruments operating upon every-day materials; and more, too, by the multiplication of laborers than by the gigantic labor of a small number of individuals. . . .

And here let it be remarked how effectually it is that Sabbath-evening schools subserve the prospective arrangement which we are now contemplating. It requires a much harder struggle than most of us are aware of to prevail on grown-up people, who never have attended church, to become the members either of a day or an evening congregation. . . . But the compliance which cannot be won in manhood for attendance on a church, we win in boyhood for attendance on a school; and when the boy becomes a man, a second effort is not necessary. . . .

It is felt by many as a deduction from the good of the local system in towns that the poorer among the families so frequently change their places of residence, and that there must not only be the same parish but also the same parishioners, else the acquaintanceship which is formed will be constantly liable to be broken up by the constant dispersion of its members. The quantity of fluctuation is greatly overrated. . . . The truth is that the movement is far more a vibratory than a successive one. The families that leave a parish this year are, in a great measure, the very families that came to it last year. There is a certain number, and those chiefly of the worse-conditioned of the population, who

are constantly upon the wing; and they alternate from one parish to another, over the heads of the stable population. A locally parochial system would serve, in the long run, to retain even these; but, even in their present amount, they leave the great bulk of the inhabitants of every parish in a fixed and permanent state for any species of cultivation that might be applied to them. . . .

There is nothing in the mere circumstance of being born in a town, or of being imported into it from the country, which can at all obliterate or reverse any of the laws of our sentient nature. That law in virtue of which a feeling of cordiality is inspired, even by a single act of recognition, and in virtue of which it is augmented into a fixed personal regard by many such acts, operates with just as much vigor in the one situation as it does in the other. In towns everything has been done to impede the reiteration of the same attentions upon the same families. The relationship between ministers and their parishes has, to every moral and to every civilizing purpose, been nearly as good as broken up. Everything has been permitted to run at random; and, as a fruit of the utter disregard of the principle of locality, have the city clergyman and his people almost lost sight of each other. It is the intimacy of connection between these two parties which has impressed its best and most peculiar features on the Scottish nation; and it were giving way to a mystic imagination altogether did we not believe that the treatment of human nature which leads to a particular result in the country would, if transplanted

into towns, lead to the same result on their crowded families. . . .

There must be a previous operation upon the people ere the desire or the demand for Sabbath accommodation can guarantee to the builders of churches that their churches shall be filled. For this purpose we hold the strict and, as nearly as may be, the exclusive union of churches with their parishes to be indispensable; and, even with this advantage, do we think that the existing habit of alienation from ordinances, instead of being altogether reclaimed by exertion, will, in part, need to be removed by death; and that it is mainly to an operation upon the young, and that through the medium of Sabbath-schools, that we have to look for the coming in of a better order of things with the coming up of another generation.

CHAPTER IV

THE EFFECT OF LOCALITY IN ADDING TO THE USEFUL ESTABLISHMENTS OF A TOWN

It were, perhaps, a sanguine anticipation to expect that the gradual process unfolded in the last chapter for reclaiming the people of our cities to a habit of attendance on the ordinances of Christianity should be completed in the course of one, or even of two, generations.

[Even with a rapid gain of the State Church there would be as much room as ever for dissenters, and their help would be needed; so that envy is unreasonable.]

There is a direct and arithmetical style of computation which often fails when it is applied to the phenomena or the principles of human nature. It is thus, for example, that many conceive an alarm lest one benevolent society should suffer in its revenues when another benevolent society is instituted in the same town and among the same people. They calculate by a mere process of subtraction upon the money of subscribers, and they do not calculate on the moral impulse which every new scheme of philanthropy is calculated to send into their hearts. They seem not aware that the mere habit of liberality in behalf of one object renders them more ac-

cessible to the claims of a new object, than if the habit had not previously been called into existence. The truth is that, after all which is given away in liberality, there is still left, in the fund for such luxuries as may easily be dispensed with and in the fund which goes to the loose and floating expenses of pocket-money, an ample remainder for meeting fresh and frequent applications. . . .

[There follows an argument which shows that Chalmers was already gaining an insight into the evils of a State Church. He shows that towns were neglecting local enterprise because they had come to look up to and depend upon the government for support. He reaches a conclusion since substantiated in the main by American experience:]

We contemplate a great national effect, not as the result of any corporate movement or any legislative operation, but as the result of a slow accumulative process, helped forward mainly by the growth and expansion of Christian philanthropy in our land, and at length completed into a whole by the simple apposition of parts done separately and done independently. . . .

It is the misfortune both of a civic and of a national legislator that he deals so much in generalities. He casts a hurried glance over the whole field of contemplation, and the influence of what he does or of what he devises is thinly spread along the face of the territory before him. He is seldom arrested by that dull and humbling arithmetic which casts up to him the utter insignificance

of all that he has attempted on the general mass and habit of society. He vainly tries by his one enactment to measure strength with the needs or the immoralities of a vast population. Nor will he submit to the mortification of being told that though the sound of it has gone forth among all the sensible and pervading influence of it is scarcely felt among any. It is the wideness of his survey which makes him overlook particulars, and with his habit of largely expatiating does he neglect completely and minutely to fill up. This it is which accounts for the utter futility of many projects splendid in promise, and vanishing away into a meagre accomplishment. This it is which explains the abortive magnificence of many of our great national undertakings. . . .

The prevailing tendency hitherto has been to attempt great things rather than do small things thoroughly and well; to set up a mechanism which will work for the whole city, rather than reduce the city into manageable parts, and seek for the accomplishment that is proposed, by the mere apposition of these parts to each other; to aspire, and that by the energies of one grand association, after some universal result, which never will be reached but by the summing up of the separate achievements of many lesser associations. It may look a strange way of proposing a universal good, either for a city or for a nation, to bid our active philanthropists never to admit the town as a whole into any of their speculations. But we are quite satisfied that much of that effort which would else have been productive is wasted. . . .

Our object at present is to guide to its highest productiveness the benevolence of him whose station and opportunities restrain him more to his own vicinity. His best contribution to the interest of the world is to do the humble and practicable task which his hand findeth to do, and to do it with all his might, till he has finished it off. A single obscure street, with its few divergent lanes, may form the length and the breadth of his enterprise; but far better that he, with such means and such associates as are within his reach, should do this thoroughly than that, merging himself in some wider association, he should vainly attempt in the gross that which never can be overtaken but in humble and laborious detail. Let him not think that the region which lies beyond the limits of his chosen and peculiar territory is to wither and be neglected because his presence is not there to fertilize it. Let him not proudly imagine himself to be the only philanthropist in the world. Let him do his part, trusting at the same time that there are others around him who have zeal enough to do theirs. . . .

The institutions which are most wanted in our great towns and populous villages are those the object of which is the Christian education of our laboring classes. This object embraces schools for ordinary scholarship through the week and churches for the delivery of gospel doctrine and exhortation on the Sabbath.

[Here follows a scheme for equalizing schools to the necessities of the population. On this subject Dr. Chalmers had published a treatise on the "System of Parochial Schools in Scotland." The plan had reference to

Scottish conditions, and many details must here be omitted.]

It is with common as with Christian education. There is not such a native and spontaneous demand for it in any country as will call forth a supply of it at all adequate to the needs of the population. If the people are left to themselves they will not by any originating movement of their own emerge out of ignorance at the first; nor will they afterward perpetuate any habit of education to which they may have been raised in the course of one generation if, in all succeeding generations, they are left wholly to seek after scholarship and wholly to pay for it. To keep up popular learning there is just the same reason for an Establishment as we have already alleged in behalf of an establishment for religion. The article must be obtruded upon them, and, in some degree, offered to them. . . .

[Dr. Chalmers did not think absolutely free public schools desirable.]

We have attempted to expose the defects both of a wholly gratuitous and of a wholly unendowed system of education; affirming that, under the one scheme, the article is undervalued, and that under the other it is not sought after to the extent to which it would be beneficial.

[Having proposed to raise a fund adequate to provide schools for all children of each parish, with tuition at a rate so low as to be within reach of the poor, the author meets the objection that this is a visionary theory.]

There are certain of our mere operatives in public business who, however plentiful their reproach of others as visionaries, never dream that they are visionaries themselves. They seem to regard it as their sufficient exemption from such a charge that their hand is so wholly occupied in practice and their mind so little, if at all, occupied with principle. . . . It would look that to escape from being a theorist upon any given topic it were altogether necessary to abstain from thinking of it; and that, to stamp a sound and experimental character on a man's notions, it is quite enough that he personally bustle and spend all his time among the mere matters of manipulation and detail. Such men, perhaps, in the whole course of their lives have given one hour of meditative solitude to the question at issue, and perhaps think that the whole effect of such a season of loneliness would be to gather around them the spectres of vain imagination. They have no other conception of a student than as of one that muses all day long over the inapplicable abstractions of an ideal and contemplative region; nor do they see how, in calm and collected retirement, it is possible for the mind to calculate and to recollect, and to be altogether conversant among the realities of the living world, over which it may have cast a most observant regard and the well known familiarities of which it is able to turn into the materials of a just view and a just anticipation. In these circumstances it ought not to be wondered at that practical men have engrossed the credit of all the practical wisdom that there is in society; and that they have missed the self-discernment which

might have led them to perceive that the possessor of a body which moves its dull and unvarying round through the duties of public office and of a mind that is either profoundly asleep to the rationale of public affairs or catches its occasional view of them by rapid and confused glances—that he, with all the confidence which a kind of coarse and hackneyed experience has given to him, may very possibly be the most blundering and bewildered of all visionaries.

[When the government gives aid the announcement should go forth that this aid is utterly inadequate; then voluntary associations will come to supplement the state gift with local contributions. These voluntary associations have already begun excellent educational enterprises, but have generally fallen short of the highest success through the error of attempting more than their means could compass. They usually plan beyond their ability to execute.]

Instead of a semblance of education for the whole, let there be the substance of it in one part, and this will at length spread and propagate its own likeness over all the other parts. It will serve like the touch of a flame to kindle the whole mass into a brilliancy as luminous as its own. . . . Our earnest advice is that no benevolent society for education shall undertake a larger space of the city than it can provide for, both completely and perpetually, by reclaiming its families to a habit of scholarship forever, through the means of a permanent endowment, attached exclusively to the district of its operations. It is far better to cultivate one district well,

though all the others should be left untouched, than to superficialize over the whole city. . . . Let none of us think to monopolize all the benevolence of the world, or fear that no future band of philanthropists shall arise to carry forward from that point at which we have exhausted our operations. If education is to be made universal in towns by voluntary benevolence, it will not be by one great, but by many small and successive, exertions. The thing will be accomplished piecemeal, and what never could be done through the working of one vast and unwieldy mechanism may thus be completed most easily in the course of a single generation. . . .

It is not known how precious and how productive a thing the operation of this local interest is, even in the poorest of our districts. The capabilities of humble life are yet far from being perfectly understood or turned to the full account of which they are susceptible. We certainly invite, and with earnestness, too, the man of fortune and philanthropy to assume a locality to himself and head an enterprise for schools in behalf of its heretofore neglected population. But little is it known to what extent the fund may be augmented by pains and perseverance among the population themselves. With a little guidance in fact may the poor be made the most effective instruments of their own amelioration. The system which could raise a single penny in the week from each family would of its own unaided self both erect and perpetuate a sufficient apparatus for schooling over the whole empire, or any part into which it was introduced, in about twelve years. This is a mine which

has lately been entered upon for the purpose of aiding those excellent religious charities that have so signalized our nation; and more is extracted from it than from all the liberalities of the opulent. In a cause so near and so exciting as that of home education, it could, by dint of strenuous cultivation, be made to yield much more abundantly. So that, should the rich refuse a helping hand to a cause so closely associated with the best interests of our country, we do not despair of the poor being at length persuaded to take it upon themselves, and of thus leaving the higher classes behind them in the career of an enlightened patriotism.

Yet it were well that the rich did step forward and signalize themselves in this matter. Amid all the turbulence and discontent which prevail in society do we believe that there is no rancor so fiery or so inveterate in the heart of the laboring classes but that a convincing demonstration of good-will on the part of those who are raised in circumstances above them could not charm it most effectually away. It is a question of nicety, how should this demonstration be rendered? Not, we think, by any public or palpable offering to the cause of indigence, for this we have long conceived should be left, and left altogether, to the sympathies of private intercourse; it being, we believe, a point of uniform experience that the more visible the apparatus is for the relief of poverty, the more is it fitted to defeat its own object, and to scatter all the jealousies attendant upon an imaginary right upon those who might else have been sweetened into gratitude by the visitations of a secret and

spontaneous kindness. Not so, however, with an offering rendered to the cause of education, let it be as public or as palpable as it may. The urgency of competition for such an object is at all times to be hailed rather than resisted; and on this career of benevolence, therefore, may the affluent go indefinitely onward till the want be fully and permanently provided for. We know no exhibition that would serve more to tranquillize our country than one which might convince the poorer classes that there is a real desire on the part of their superiors in wealth to do for them anything which they believe to be for their good. It is an expression of an interest in them which does so much to soothe and to pacify the discontents of men; and all that is wanted is that the expression shall be of such a sort as not to injure, but to benefit those for whom it is intended. . . .

Ere the apparatus shall be raised which is able, not faintly to skim, but thoroughly to saturate the families of our poor with education, there will be room for large sums and large sacrifices; nor do we know on whom the burden of this cause can sit so gracefully and so well as on those who have speculated away their feelings of attachment from all societies for the relief of indigence . . . and who are now bound to demonstrate that this is not because their judgment has extinguished their sensibilities, but because they only want an object set before them which may satisfy their understanding, that, without doing mischief, they may largely render of their means to the promotion of it.

We are sensible that to look for a universal result, in

the way that we have now recommended, is to presuppose a very wide extension of Christian zeal, seconded by an equal degree of Christian liberality all over the land. If it be visionary to look for this, then do we hold it alike visionary to look for any great moral improvement in the economy of our national institutions without this. We see not our way to any public or extended amelioration save through the medium of greater worth in the character of individuals, and a greater number of such individuals in the country; and but for this would we give up in despair that cause on which both politicians and moralists have embarked so many sanguine speculations. It is not, we think, on the arena of state partisanship that a victory for this cause is to be decided; but that, similarly to the growth of the small prophetic stone which at length attained to the size of a mountain that filled the whole earth, will it gradually proceed onwards, just as the spirit and principles of the gospel find a numerical way through human hearts and multiply their proselytes among human families. If it be here that a contemptuous scepticism discovers the weak side of our argument, and proclaims it accordingly, it is also here that prophecy lifts up the light of its cheering countenance on all our anticipations. Meanwhile its best and brightest fulfilments are not to be without human agency; and even already do we see a rising philanthropy in our day which warrants our fondest hopes both of the increase of learning and virtue among our population. For a time it may waste a portion of its energies among the by-paths of inexperience.

Ambition may bewilder it. Impatience may cause it to overrun itself. A taste for generalities may dazzle it into many fond and foolish imaginations; and the ridicule of an incredulous public may await the mortifying failures which will ever mark the enterprise of him whose aim is beyond the means of his accomplishment. But the spirit of benevolence will not be evaporated among all these difficulties. It will only be nurtured into greater strength, and guided into a path of truer wisdom, and sobered into a habit of more humble and at the same time far more effective perseverance. Man will at length learn to become more practical and less imaginative. He will hold it a worthier achievement to do for a little neighborhood than to devise for a whole world. . . . The glory of establishing in our world that universal reign of truth and righteousness which is coming will not be the glory of any one man, but it will be the glory of Him who sitteth above and plieth His many millions of instruments for bringing about this magnificent result. It is enough for each of us to be one of these instruments, to contribute his little item to the cause, and look for the sum-total as the product of innumerable contributions, each of them as meritorious, and many of them, perhaps, far more splendid and important than our own.

CHAPTER V

ON CHURCH PATRONAGE

[This chapter deals almost entirely with phases and problems of life peculiar to Scotland, and now radically changed even there. The separation of Church and State in our country makes obsolete a discussion of the way of adjustment of powers of State and Church under one government.

The author recommends that local schools should secure suitable teachers by making part of the teacher's income depend on his pleasing the families who send their children and who pay part of the cost in tuition. In the same way he thinks the rich and influential should not have absolute power of appointing pastors, but that the people should have a share in selecting those who are to minister to their spiritual needs. If the pastor is popular, his support is assured out of the gifts of the attendants. "That the house be well filled, the great and sufficient step is that the pulpit be well filled."

It must be remembered that Chalmers has in mind a population of laboring people who have inherited the traditions of one race and one religion and one language. He is not thinking of cities like our American cities, which have in some quarters vast colonies of Roman Catholics of various races and tongues, and other colonies of Jews, distinct by race and religion from the Protestant Christians, who, themselves, are divided into many sects, and these not always ready to co-operate or to treat each

other with cordial sympathy in labors for a common end. But even under our greatly different conditions, some of Chalmers' suggestions are of high value and permanent application. The conflict between the political authorities and the earnest element in the State Church is very apparent in this chapter, and we can already see the plain signs of that struggle which finally led Chalmers, with great pain and sorrow, to lead a party out of the Establishment in order to escape from the control and patronage of men who had no sympathy with an aggressive and devoted kind of Christianity, such as he believed in.]

Instead of a respectful deference to the popular opinion, there is often a haughty, intolerant, and avowed defiance to it, and we then see the longings of the public sorely thwarted by the resolute and impregnable determination of the patron. It may easily be conceived, therefore, how wide the disruption is between the ruling and the subject party when a spirit altogether adverse to the prevailing taste is seen to preside over the great bulk of our ecclesiastical nominations. If power and popularity shall ever stand in hostile array against each other, we are not to wonder though the result should be a church on the one hand, frowning aloof in all the pride and distance of hierarchy upon our population, and a people on the other, revolted into utter distaste for establishments, and mingling with this a very general alienation of heart from all that carries the stamp of authority in the land.

We should like, even for the cause of public tranquillity and good order, that there were a more respect-

ful accommodation to the popular taste in Christianity than the dominant spirit of ecclesiastical patronage in our day is disposed to render it. We conceive the two main ingredients of this taste to be, in the first place, that esteem which is felt by human nature for what is believed to be religious honesty; and, in the second place, the appetite of human nature, when made in any degree alive to a sense of its spiritual wants, for that true and Scriptural ministration which alone can relieve them.

[The author thinks that the civil rulers have been misled and misinformed by a certain party of ecclesiastics whose theological views are out of sympathy with those of the people. In consequence of the appointments made under this influence the people have deserted the churches, refused to listen to the preachers set over them, and have become all the more irritated against the government itself because it sets their tastes and preferences at scorn. This is a serious cause of peril to the commonwealth and to social security and order.

An objection to the popular selection of pastors is made on the ground of their occasional apparent preference of preachers who delight them with fantastic and trifling conceits, and who measure the sermons and services by their length and loudness. The author thinks that these vagaries of the people are upon the surface and easily corrected by independent and earnest men. The popular taste is not a mere fantastic relish, but a " deep and strong aspiration of conscious humanity, feeling, and most intelligently feeling, what the truths and who the teachers are that are most fitted to exalt and moralize her." Chalmers shows, though with some false notes, a genuine respect for democracy and a hope of its future, akin to that of Lincoln.

A second objection against the popular selection of ministers is noticed: that the doctrine which they like to hear is immoral in its theory and tendencies. There were many in places of authority who believed that the "evangelical" doctrines which were the fire of Chalmers' eloquence tended to undermine morality. The message which went to the heart of the poor was that all men are sinners alike before the perfect God; that all alike must repent of sin; that all alike must be saved by a pure act of grace. Many think that this obliterates distinctions of character and leads to disregard for the value of character. Chalmers answers these objections by showing the relation between the doctrine of free grace and a holy life.]

The gospel maintains a most entire consistency with itself. It unfolds that provision by which atonement has been made for the guilt of sin, but it never ceases announcing as its ulterior object to exterminate the being of sin from the heart and the practice of all its disciples. Its office is not merely to reconcile the world, but to regenerate the world; and there is not an honest believer who rejoices in pardon and does not, at the same time, aspire after moral excellence; knowing that to prosecute a strenuous departure from all iniquity is his expressly assigned vocation, and that he who, from Christ as a redeemer, has obtained deliverance from the punishment of sin, must, under him as a captain, hold an unsparing war with the power and the existence of it. The gate of reconciliation, through the blood of Christ, is not merely the gate of escape from a region of wrath, it is the gate of introduction to a field of progressive and

aspiring virtue; and it is the growth of this virtue upon earth which constitutes its full and its finished beatitude. . . . And, as if to shut out all possibility of escape from the toils and the employments of virtue, does it make known a day of judgment, wherein man will be reckoned with, not for his dogmata, but for his doings; and when there will be no other estimate of his principles than the impulse which they gave to his practical history in the world—they who have done good being called forth to the resurrection of the just, and they who have done evil unto the resurrection of damnation.

The integrity of such a creed is the best guarantee for the integrity of his relative and social conduct. And it is only in proportion to the prevalence of this derided orthodoxy that the honesties and sobrieties of life will spread in healthful diffusion over the face of the country. That system of doctrine which is stigmatized as methodism, and against which government are led to array the whole force of their overwhelming patronage; and on the approaches of which ecclesiastics are often seen to combine as they would against the inroads of some pestilential visitor; and which, when it does appear within the well-smoothed garden of the Establishment, is viewed as a loathsome weed that should be cast out and left to luxuriate in its rankness, among the wilds and the commons of sectarianism—what a quantity of undesigned outrage must be inflicted every year on the best objects, both of principle and of patriotism, should this, indeed, be the alone system that has the truth of

heaven impressed upon it, and the alone system that can transform and moralize the families of our land!

If, then, evangelical Christianity be popular Christianity; if its lessons are ever sure to have the most attractive influence upon the multitude; if, whatever the explanation of the fact may be, the fact itself is undeniable, that the doctrine of our first Reformers, consisting mainly of justification by faith and sanctification through the Spirit of God, is the doctrine which draws the most crowded audiences around our pulpits; and this doctrine is, at the same time, the most powerful moralizing agent that can be brought to bear upon them, then does it follow that the voice of the people indicates most clearly, in this matter, what is best for the virtue of the people; that the popular taste is the organ by which conscious humanity expresses what that is which is best fitted both to exalt and console her; and that, by the neglect and the defiance which are so wantonly rendered to its intimations, are our statesmen withholding the best aliment of a people's worth, and therefore the best specific for a nation's welfare.

But we now proceed to the third great prejudice which requires to be combated. In the mind of many of our politicians there is a conceived alliance between the fervor of the popular demand for that religion which is most palatable and the fervor of the popular demand for those rights which form the great topic of disaffection and complaint among the restless spirits of our community. . . .

[This view, the author thinks, rests on a misconception and misrepresentation of the spirit of the evangelical people. One may think that entire contentment with industrial conditions is not altogether so admirable as Dr. Chalmers supposed. In the next lines he seems to touch another false note:]

But there are other causes for the delusion that we are now attempting to expose; and, perhaps, the most powerful of them is that insignificance in which a spiritual and devoted adherent of the evangelical system will generally hold all the common objects of partisanship. He cannot, with a heart preoccupied by eternal things, let himself down to a keen interest in the rivalry of this world's politics. Like a man intent on the prosecution of a journey, and with a mind absorbed by the objects of it, he cannot mingle any great earnestness or intensity of feeling with the disputes of his fellow-travellers, and especially if they relate to matters connected with the mere comfort and accommodation of the few days in which they are to keep together.

[Thus the most worldly and self-seeking ministers, devoted to the interests of some State party, and least faithful in the discharge of parish duties, may be precisely those who are promoted in the State Church by the leaders of politics.]

The minister who had earned the confidence of his people by urging the faithful exposition of all Scripture upon them, stands on a high and secure vantage ground when, out of that indelible record, he bids them honor

the king, and obey magistrates, and meddle not with those who are given to change, and lead a quiet and peaceful life, in all godliness and honesty. These accents would fall utterly powerless from the lips of one who, on an arena of partisanship, had manifested the heat or the worldliness of a mere political clergyman. But they would carry another influence along with them when recognized as the effusions of the same honest principle which took the whole round of Scripture and brought forth of its treasury all the truths and lessons that are to be found in it. . . . A church filled with the zealous friends and retainers of one leading political interest can have no authority over a population whom the very character of its priesthood has alienated from its services. A church teeming with zealous, and holy, and well-principled evangelists, that has drawn largely of its hearers from the multitude, and won largely on their veneration and regard, such a church, without one offering at the shrine of any party whatever, but mixing her lessons of loyalty with all the other lessons of the Christian law, will be found, in the fiercest day of a nation's trial, to be its best and surest palladium.

But the partisanship of clergymen is just as hurtful on the one side of politics as the other. The spirit of their office should raise them above this arena altogether and lead them to refrain from taking any share in the contest at all. We believe that the fancied alliance between the party of Whiggism in the State and the Evangelical party in the Church has tended, in Scotland, to the discouragement and depression of the best of causes.

It has helped to direct the whole power and patronage of government against the more acceptable clergy of our land, and so multiplied the topics of heartburning and irritation between the people and their rulers. A few political clergy standing prominently forth, on either side of the Church, will suffice to fasten a political imputation on the whole body that is represented by them. . . . A priesthood strictly devoted to their own professional objects, and keeping aloof from the contest of this world's politics, and neither servile in their loyalty nor boisterous in their independence, and ardently prosecuting the literature of their order or the labor of love in their parishes, the intent and engrossing aim of such a priesthood is to rear a generation for eternity. But still the blessings which they would scatter along the path of time are also incalculable. The promise of the life that now is, as well as of the life that is to come, is attendant upon all their exertions.

CHAPTER VI

ON CHURCH PATRONAGE, CONTINUED

[DR. CHALMERS alludes to the English Established Church and the effort of statesmen and prelates to suppress evangelical fervor, which they called "methodism," and which our author regards as essential to the popularity and social usefulness of the legal Church. He insists that lawlessness is the result of popular infidelity, not of evangelical zeal; and that the exclusion of the people from all voice in the selection of their pastors tends to alienate them still further from both religion and government. Under this undemocratic policy he fears that "the alienation of the people will widen every year from the bosom of the Establishment; and the Establishment, reft of all spiritual virtue, will at length be reduced to a splendid impotency of noble edifices, and highly gifted endowments, and stately imposing ceremonial. . . ."

He reminds the reader that in Scotland the ecclesiastical authorities have the power to prevent the active ministrations of a pastor nominated by a patron if he seems to them on any ground unsuitable. If in the past the Scotch Church has yielded to the demands of patrons and surrendered her privileges, it still has the legal right to assert its veto power and secure suitable appointments.]

It is on these principles that there are not a few of the clergy who cleave to the Establishment, in spite of all

the partial corruptions that sectarianism has alleged against her. They see in the bosom of their own Church an open avenue to every desirable reformation. They honestly believe that there is not a better range of Christian usefulness to be found over the whole face of the country than within her walls; and that a man of principle and zeal, when backed by the independence which she confers, and shielded about by the amplitude of her securities and her power, stands on the highest of all vantage ground for the work of honest and faithful ministrations. They trust that she is the destined instrument for the preservation and the revival of Christianity in our land, and would tremble for her overthrow as the severest blow that, in this quarter of the island, could be inflicted on the cause of the gospel. . . .

With the great majority of dissenters the appointment of ministers is by popular election. The right of suffrage is more or less extended, however, being sometimes vested in the sitters of a congregation, at other times restricted to the members of it or those who have been admitted to the ordinances, and, in no small number of instances, being exclusively in the hands of proprietors, or trustees, who own the chapel and bind themselves to defray, from the proceeds of it, all the expenses of the concern. We do not hold the last of these arrangements to be different, in point of effect, from either of the two former. It affords, no doubt, the example of a patronage shared among so many individuals, but still of a patronage controlled by the hearers and in a state of dependence on the popular will. It is the ob-

vious and direct interest of the electors to fix on the man who, by his talents and doctrine, shall secure a full attendance upon his ministrations, and so secure, at least, a sufficient rental for meeting all the engagements. This state of things is tantamount to a right of patronage vested in a few, with the power of veto on each nomination vested in the many, a power which will be exercised on each successive appointment, till that one individual is brought forward in whom the patronage and the popularity come to an adjustment with each other. . . .

After all, it must often happen that, even under the most democratic economy of a congregation, the minister virtually obtains his office by the appointment of a few, and only with the acquiescence of the many. In every assemblage of human beings this is the method by which all their proceedings are really carried forward. The ascendency of worth, or talent, or station, or some other natural influence, is ever sure to vest the power of originating in the few, and to leave nothing with the many but the power of a veto; nay, even, in many instances, to disarm them of that power. The work of choosing their minister in a dissenting congregation is, we doubt not, in the great majority of instances, most wisely and most peaceably conducted. But, on looking to principles as well as to forms, we have as little doubt that, in very many instances, the appointment is the result of a harmonized meeting between what may be called a virtual deed of patronage, on the one hand, and the power of a negative on the other. . . .

[The author argues that the patronage of a State Church may be so regulated that it will be a source of good. At the same time he insists that dissenters should be treated with kindness and be left free to compete with the Establishment in a fair and earnest rivalry of good works. When all have done their utmost, multitudes will still be neglectful and neglected. The argument for toleration of dissent was made long before Chalmers left the Establishment, and one can see how his mind was being prepared, unconsciously, for a radical step which was taken years later. In reality he was making a plea for that dissenting party which he did not yet foresee, and of which he was to be the leader. The evils of patronage finally came to appear to him incurable and intolerable, and he went out from under its yoke.

Urging again the principle of locality and of a resident minister for each parish, in terms which reveal the very roots of the "Social Settlement" idea, the author pleads for an adequate supply of houses of worship for the neglected population of cities, rapidly becoming alienated from religion, morality, and good order. He asserts that of all those who had been charged with riot and sedition not one had been found to be a member of the dissenting churches.]

The best arrangement for a town that has only ten churches, and would need thirty, is, in supplementing the deficiency, to descend from spires to belfries; and, besides observing the utmost simplicity in the buildings, to assign such an income to the clergyman as that the whole expenses, both of the erection and endowment, may, as nearly as possible, be met by the proceeds of attendance. This would give confidence, and call forth

a much more productive effort, in the way of private subscription for the cause, or even enable magistrates to take the cause into their own hands. But, in every possible way, it is a cause which ought to be carried forward; and those are the most patriotic and enlightened rulers who, laying aside the prejudices which have hitherto kept popularity and patronage at so heartless a distance from each other, shall now give their promptitude to the great object of so multiplying churches as to meet the necessities of the people, and of so appointing churches as to draw them to a willing attendance on the ministrations of Christianity.

CHAPTER VII

ON CHURCH OFFICES

By the constitution of the Church of Scotland it is provided that in each parish there shall be at least one minister whose office it is to preach and dispense the ordinances of Christianity on the Sabbath, and to labor in holy things among the people through the week; and elders, whose office it is to assist at the dispensation of sacraments, to be the bearers of religious advice and comfort among the families, and, in general, to act as purely ecclesiastical laborers for the good of human souls; and, lastly, deacons, to whom it belongs, not to preach the word or administer the sacraments, but to take special care in administering to the necessities of the poor. In the course of time the last of these three offices has fallen into very general desuetude. The duties of it have been transferred to the eldership, the members of which body have thus been vested with a plurality of cares, it being both their part to labor in matters connected with the religious good of the people and to share in the administration of those funds which the law or custom of the country has provided for meeting the demands of its pauperism. . . .

In the great majority of our Scottish parishes the sum

expended on pauperism is raised by voluntary collection, and still maintains the character of a ministration of kindness. It is so very small in amount as not to have come very sensibly or extensively into contact with the lower orders of society, who, in those parts of the country where the method of legal assessments for the poor has not been established, still retain the veteran hardihood and independence of their forefathers, and among whom the condition of known and public dependence is still regarded in the light of a family misfortune or a family degradation.

[The case of the elder who acts as deacon of poor funds is considered. The custom of raising this fund by taxation was growing in Scotland, and Chalmers regarded this tendency with dread. He felt that it would degrade the poor and increase class hostility by changing relief from private generosity to public and legal compulsion.]

He goes forth among them as an elder when he goes forth to pray with them, or to address them on the subject of Christianity, or to recommend their attention to its ordinances, or to take cognizance of the education of their children. There are indeed a thousand expedients by which he may attempt a religious influence among the people, and, in plying these expedients, he acts purely as an ecclesiastical laborer. And, did he act singly in this capacity, we might know what to make of the welcome which he obtains from the families. But they recognize him to be also a dispenser of temporalities;

and they have an indefinite imagination of his powers, and of his patronage, and of his funds; and their sordid or mercenary expectations are set at work by the very sight of him; and thus some paltry or interested desire of their own may lurk under the whole of that apparent cordiality which marks the intercourse of the two parties. It were a great satisfaction to disentangle one principle here from another, and this can only be done by separating the one office from the other. It were desirable to ascertain how much of liking there is for the Christian and how much for the pecuniary ministration with which this philanthropist is charged. The union of these two throws an impenetrable obscurity over this question and raises a barrier against the discernment of real character among the people with whom we deal.

But this combination does more than disguise the principles of the people. It serves also to deteriorate them. If there be any nascent affection among them toward that which is sacred it is well to keep it single, to defend it from the touch of every polluting ingredient, and most strenuously to beware of holding out encouragement to that most subtle of all hypocrisies, the hypocrisy of the heart; which is most surely and most effectually done when the lessons of preparations for another world are mixed up with the bribery of certain advantages in this world. . . . Simplicity of desire, or the want of it, makes the whole difference between being full of light and full of darkness. It is thus that Christ refuses to be a judge and a divider; and that the apostles totally resign the office of ministering to the

temporal wants of the poor; and that Paul, in particular, is at so much pains both to teach and to exemplify among his disciples the habit of independence on charity to the very uttermost, denouncing the hypocrisy of those who make gain of godliness, and even going so far as to affirm that the man who had joined their society with a view to his own personal relief, out of its funds, from the expense of maintaining his own household, was worse than an infidel. . . .

[The elder who earnestly seeks to perform both offices, spiritual and temporal, is in a trying position.]

What a bounty he carries around with him on the worst kind of dissimulation. Like a substance where neither of the ingredients taken singly is poisonous, and which assumes all its virulence from the composition of them, what a power of insidious but most fatal corruption lies in the mere junction of these two offices! . . . What a mortifying indifference to the topic he has most at heart, under all the constrained appearance of attention which is rendered to it. With what dexterity can the language of sanctity be pressed into the service when their purpose requires it, and yet how evident, how mortifyingly evident often, is the total absence of all feeling and desire upon the subject from the hearts of these wily politicians. . . .

There may be no great harm done by putting this administration into the hands of an eldership so long as the money is raised in the shape of a free-will offering from the giver . . . or so long as they have to deal

only with moderate sums among moderate expectations. But, when the fund is raised in a legal and compulsory way by assessment, and when that which wont to be petitioned for in the shape of charity is demanded in the shape of justice, and when the people are thus armed with the force and impetus of an aggressive legality, upon the one side, and are not met in the firm and resolute spirit of a defensive legality upon the other, there will in time be among us a far more rapid acceleration of pauperism than ever has been exemplified in England.

[If a church officer, taking a severe attitude, refuses expected relief from the tax fund, then he is hated and distrusted by the clamorous poor, and his religious counsels are met with bitterness. The country should return to the old method by which relief came from voluntary offerings.]

But should this plan be adopted it were greatly better that the Church should be altogether dissevered from the ministrations of public charity. We shall never cease to regret the introduction of a legal spirit into the work of human benevolence, and to regard the establishment of a compulsory provision for the poor as one of the worst invasions ever made on the olden habit of our country, and as one of the deadliest obstacles to its moral regeneration. But if this curse is to be perpetuated upon our land, let elders and deacons, and all who hold any ecclesiastical character among us, cease from this moment to be implicated in a business so mischievous. . . . Nor let these laborers in the cause of Scotland's piety

and Scotland's worth be charged with any distribution of a quality so poisonous, and at the same time so alluring, that they can neither withhold it without alienating many hearts from them nor spread it freely around without insinuating corruption into these hearts and scattering the seeds of a great and pernicious distemper over the land. . . .

There is a delusive fear to which inexperience is liable upon this subject, as if there were a very general rapacity among the families of the poor, which, if not appeased out of the capabilities of the public fund, would render it altogether unsafe for any private individual in the upper walks of society to move at large among their habitations. . . .

The truth is that there is a far greater sufficiency among the lower classes of society than is generally imagined; and our first impressions of their want and wretchedness are generally by much too aggravated, nor do we know a more effectual method of reducing these impressions than to cultivate a closer acquaintance with their resources and their habits and their whole domestic economy. It is certainly in the power of artificial expedients to create artificial desires, and to call out a host of applications that would never have otherwise been made. And we know of nothing which leads more directly and more surely to this state of things than a great regular provision for indigence, obtruded with all the characters of legality and certainty and abundance upon the notice of the people. But wherever the securities which nature hath established for the relief and

mitigation of extreme distress are not so tampered with, where the economy of individuals, and the sympathy of neighbors, and a sense of the relative duties among kinsfolk are left, without disturbance, to their own silent and simple operation—it will be found that there is nothing so formidable in the work of traversing a whole mass of congregated beings, and of encountering all the clamors, whether of real or fictitious necessity, that may be raised by our appearance among them. . . . We know not, indeed, how one can be made more effectually to see with his own eyes the superfluousness of all public and legalized charity than just to assume a district and become the familiar friend of the people who live in it, and to do for them the thousand nameless offices of Christian regard, and to encourage, in every judicious and inoffensive way, their dependence upon themselves and their fellow-feeling for one another. Such a process of daily observation as this will do more than all political theory can do to convince him with what safety the subsistence of a people may be left to their own capabilities, and how the modern pauperism of our days is a superstructure altogether raised on the basis of imposture and worthlessness—a basis which the very weight of the superstructure is fitted to consolidate and to extend.

It is not the *materiel* of benevolence given to those few of his families who may require it that will bind to him the population he has assumed. This may be necessary to indicate the honesty of his principles. But it is the *morale* of benevolence, it is the unbounded and universal spirit of kindness felt by him for all the families,

and expressing itself in numberless other ways besides the giving of alms—it is this which will raise him to his chief and useful ascendency over them. It is seldom adverted to how much a simple affection, if it be but authentically manifested in any one way, is fitted to call forth affection back again. It is little known how open even the rudest and wildest of a city population are to the magic of this sweetening influence. There is here one precious department of our nature which seems not to have been so overspread as the rest of it by the ruins of the fall. Perhaps vanity and selfishness may enter as elements into the effect; but certain it is that if one human being see in the heart of another a good-will toward himself, he is not able, and far less is he willing, to stifle or to withhold the reciprocal good-will that he feels to arise in his own bosom. This is a phenomenon of our nature which the hardy administrators of a poor's house have little conception of; and they may be heard to predict that if you disjoin an elder from all the patronage which he shares with them you take away from him the only instrument by which he can ever hope to conciliate his families. . . . The hostility of the people, or the hypocrisy of the people, may be abundantly nourished out of the elements of the present system, but it is by the play of finer elements altogether that the hearts of the people are to be won. We are quite aware of the incredulity of practical men upon this subject; but it is just because they are not practical enough that they are blind to the truth and cannot perceive it. . . .

This is a question which it is better to try than to argue. And yet it ought to be a palpable thing, even with our most every-day observers, that humanity is so constituted as to derive a sensation of pleasure from another's love as well as from the fruit of another's liberality. . . . This is a world which, gross and sensual as the general nature of its inhabitants may be, and keenly directed as their appetites are toward silver and gold, or such materials of enjoyment as these can produce, it is still a world where, through all its generations, the charm even of simple kindness is not unfelt, even when it has nothing to bestow; . . . it is a world where we affirm that good-will, though unaccompanied with wealth, can spread a higher and more permanent felicity, even among its poorer vicinities, than ever wealth can, in all its profusion, unaccompanied with good-will. . . .

The man who has nothing to give but the expression of his friendly regard may, in fact, be dealing out among his fellows the materials of real enjoyment. It will not be difficult to convince of this truth the members of an affectionate family, in the transference of whose kindly feelings from one to another they intimately know, that there is a sensation far more precious to the heart than can be wrought there by the transference of gold or silver. Neither will it be difficult to convince a man of ever-flowing cordiality in the walks of social intercourse who, whether at the festive board or even in his hurried passage through the bustle and throng of a street teeming with acquaintances, is most thoroughly con-

scious of the pleasure that is both given and received by the smile and the rapid inquiry, and even the most slight and momentary token of deference and good-will. Neither will it be difficult to make the truth of this lesson be recognized by him who has had frequent experience and fellowship among the abodes of poverty, and who can attest how pure and how delicious that incense is which arises from the simple acknowledgments of those who, save their regard and the expression of their honest attachment, have positively nothing to bestow.

And neither will it be difficult to make this whole matter plain to the reflection of the poor themselves, upon whose humble vicinities the wealthy have seldom or never entered, and who well know that, within the narrow compass of their own intercourse, a bright and gladdening influence may be conveyed from one humble tenement to another; and that if the next-door neighbor bear an affection to them, it throws a light into their bosoms which would not be there if he bore against them a grudge or a displeasure; and that the difference in point of feeling between an atmosphere of kind agreement and an atmosphere of fierce and fiery contention is just as distinct as will be the difference between heaven and hell; insomuch that, after all, it is not so much the occasional liberality of him who makes the transient visit and leaves behind him some token of his abundance—it is not this which so cheers and alleviates the lot of poverty, as that more steadfast and habitual blessedness which, by the kindness of immediate neighbors, may be made to shine and to settle around

its habitation. All this is abundantly obvious among the various conditions of society, in the bosom of the family, or among the rich, as to the sweetness which they have themselves experienced in a simple offering of affection from the poor; or, among the poor, in all that they know and feel of the relationship in which they stand with the members of their own neighborhood. And the only difficulty, in completing this proof, which we have to contend with is when we attempt to convince the rich that, while it is their duty to give of their gold and silver to those who stand in need of them, it is their kindness which, if actually perceived to be genuine, is more valued and more enjoyed by the poor than even the fruit of their kindness; it is the principle which prompted the offering that, after all, affords a truer relish of their feelings than the offering itself; it is the community of hearts which raises and delights them more than even the community of goods. If the one be established between the various classes of society it will no doubt bring the best and fittest proportion of the other along with it. But the thing of importance to be remarked just now is that nature, even when sunk in abject poverty, and, therefore, relieved in her more pressing wants by an act of almsgiving, is still more soothed and conciliated by an exhibition of good-will on the part of the giver than by the whole material product of the beneficence that he has rendered; that it is a gross, and in every way an injurious, misconception of the poor to think them beyond the reach of those finer influences which reciprocate between pure sympathy on the one

hand and a simple sense and observation of that sympathy on the other. . . .

This ascendency of the moral over the material part of our constitution is no romance and no fabrication of poetry. It is exemplified every day in the living and the ordinary walk of human experience. There is not on the face of our world one neighborhood of contiguous families either so poor or so profligate as to withstand these repeated demonstrations; and that sullenness of character which no bribery could reduce, and which gathers a deeper and more determined gloom when the hand of authority is applied to it, has been rendered as tractable as childhood under the mighty and the magical spell of a meek and endearing and undissembled charity.

The law of reciprocal attraction between one heart and another is a law of nature as well as of Christianity, insomuch that no sooner does the regard of a philanthropist for the people of his district come to be recognized than their regard for him, and that, too, both from the converted and the unconverted, will attest of what kind of material humanity is formed. . . .

Let suspicion be but once dissipated, and the enmity of nature be disarmed by the true and touching demonstrations of a real principle of kindness, and ridicule have ceased from its uproar, and contempt have discharged all its vociferations, and the man's worth and benevolence become manifest as day; then, though the ministration of gold and silver be that which fortune hath altogether denied him, it is both very striking and

very encouraging to behold how, in spite of themselves, he steals the hearts of the people away from them; how, as if by the operation of some mystic spell, the most restless and profligate of them all feel the softening influence of his presence and of his doings; and how, in the cheap and humble services of tending their children, and visiting their sick, and ministering in sacred exercises at the couch of the dying, and filling up his opportunities of intercourse with the utterance of holy advice and the exhibition of holy example, there is, in these simple and unaccompanied attentions, a charm felt and welcomed, even in the most polluted atmosphere that ever settled around the most corrupt and crowded of human habitations.

This is not credited by many of our citizens; and men who deliver themselves in a tone of grave and respectable and imposing experience may be heard to affirm, that, unless an elder be vested with a power of administration over the public money, he will be an unwelcome visitor with the general run of families; that he will meet with few to bid him God-speed on the single and abstract errand of Christianity; and that, while the old system of payments without prayers was acceptable enough, the new system of prayers without payments will banish the whole host of eldership in our city from the acceptance and good-will of its inhabitants. Surely this is a matter of proof and not of probability; a thing that may be committed to the decision of experience, instead of being left to the contentions of reason or of sophistry.

Let an elder count it his duty to hold a habitual in-

tercourse of kindness with the people of his district, and for this purpose devote but a few hours in the week to their highest interests; out of the fulness of a heart animated with good-will to men, and in particular with that good-will which points to the good of their eternity, let him make use of every practical expedient for spreading among them the light and influence of the gospel; let it be his constant aim to warn the unruly, to comfort the afflicted, to stimulate the education of children, to press the duty of attending ordinances, to make use of all his persuasion in private and of all his influence to promote such public and parochial measures as may forward the simple design of making our people good and pious and holy—then, though he should go forth among them stripped of power and patronage and pecuniary administrations; though his honest and Christian goodwill be all he has to recommend him; though the various secularities by which the offices of our Church have been polluted and degraded shall be conclusively done away, and the whole armory of our influence among the people be reduced to the simple element of good-will, and friendship, and personal labor, and unwearied earnestness in the prosecution of their spiritual welfare; yet, with these, and these alone, will any of our elders at length find a welcome in every heart and a home in every habitation. Others may then take up the ministration which he has put away. But it will be his presence which will awaken the finest glow of kindly and reverential feeling among our population. Though out of any public treasury he neither has gold nor silver to give,

yet let him just do with his means and his opportunities as every Christian should do, and feel as every Christian should feel, and he will rarely meet with a family so poor as to undervalue his attentions, or a family so profligate as to persist in despising them. . . .

The Christian elder who has resigned the temporalities of his office should not think that, on that account, he has little in his power. His presence has a power. His advice has a power. His friendship has a power. The moral energy of his kind attentions and Christian arguments has a power. His prayers at the bed of sickness and at the funeral of a departed parishioner have a power. The books that he recommends to his people, and the minister whom he prevails on them to hear, and the habit of regular attendance upon the ordinances to which he introduces them, have a power. His supplications to God for them in secret have a power. Dependence upon him and upon his blessing for the success of his own feeble endeavors has a power. And when all these are brought to bear on the rising generation; when the children have learned both to know and to love him; when they come to feel the force of his approbation, and, on every recurring visit, receive a fresh impulse from him to diligence at school and dutiful behavior out of it; when the capabilities of his simple Christian relationship with the people thus come to be estimated; it is not saying too much to say that with such as him there lies the precious interest of the growth and transmission of Christianity in the age that is now passing over us, and that, in respect of his own selected

neighborhood, he is the depository of the moral and spiritual destinies of the future age.

[The author here urges that the elders of the Church, as respected laymen, by taking small districts, might render valuable help to the pastors of parishes, and he regards with regret the increasing neglect of this service on the part of business men. He adds a few suggestions to deacons, the laymen of the Church who had the care of the poor fund. He urges that they should act upon the principles just urged upon the elders.]

We know not a more interesting case that can be submitted to a deacon than when an applicant proposes, for the first time, to draw relief from a public charity. This he is often compelled to do from some temporary distress that hangs over his family; and if the emergency could be got over without a public and degrading exposure of him who labors under it, there would both be a most substantial saving of the public fund and a most soothing act of kindness rendered to the person who is applying for it. If by the influence of the deacon, or that of his friends, work could be provided for a man in such circumstances, or some private and delicate mode of relief be devised for him, then we know not in what other way he could more effectually establish himself as the most valuable servant of the public and the best and kindest friend of his own immediate population.

[The deaconship is regarded as a temporary makeshift; the author having the conviction that ultimately public relief in homes will be abolished and charity left to individual benevolence.]

CHAPTER VIII

ON SABBATH-SCHOOLS

It is well that in the various religious establishments of Europe provision should have been made for the learning as well as for the subsistence of a regular clergy. It is well when a teacher of the gospel, in addition to the strict literature of his own profession, is further accomplished in the general literature of his times. We do not hold it indispensable that all should be so accomplished. But that is a good course of education for the Church, which will not only secure the possibility that every minister may be learned in theology, but also a chance, bordering upon certainty, that some of them shall attain an eminence in authority and respect in the other sciences. Christianity should be provided with friends and defenders in every quarter of human society; and there should be among them such a distribution of weapons as may be adapted to all the varieties of that extended combat which is ever going on between the Church and the world. And there is special reason why the prejudices of philosophy against the gospel should, if possible, be met and mastered by men capable of standing on the very same arena and plying the very same tactics with the most powerful of its votaries,—

and that, not so much because of the individual benefit which may thereby be rendered to these philosophers, as because of their ascendent influence over the general mind of society, and because of the mischief that would ensue to myriads beside themselves, could an exhibition so degrading be held forth to the world as that of Christianity which laid claim to the light of revelation, retiring abashed from the light of cultivated nature, and not daring the encounter, when men rich in academic lore or lofty in general authorship came forth in hostility against her.

[The learned ministers are useful to the unlearned laborers by upholding the honor of the gospel in high places and by furnishing materials for thought. Yet the layman and the untaught may render most useful service by teaching and witnessing to the vital truths of religion. The illumination of the divine spirit is not denied to those who have moral reverence and holy purpose and have not spent early years in academic halls. Jonathan Edwards, the American philosopher and theologian, is praised as a man who had not only the power and training of the scholar, but also the earnest and practical piety of the pastor.]

It is here that churches, under the domination of a worldly and unsanctified priesthood, are apt to go astray. They confide the cause wherewith they are entrusted to the merely intellectual class of laborers, and they have overlooked, or rather have violently and impetuously resisted, the operative class of laborers. They conceive that all is to be done by regulation, and that nothing but

what is mischievous is to be done by impulse. Their measures are generally all of a sedative, and few or none of them of a stimulating, tendency. Their chief concern is to repress the pruriencies of religious zeal, and not to excite or foster the zeal itself. . . . It is quite a possible thing for the same church to have a proud complacency in the lore and argument and professional science of certain of its ministers; and, along with this, to have a proud contempt for the pious earnestness and pious activity of certain other of its ministers. It may applaud the talent by which Christianity is estimated, but discourage the talent by which Christianity is made. . . . To judge of an impression requires one species of talent, to make an impression requires another. They both may exist in very high perfection with the same individual. But they may also exist apart. . . . The right way for a church is to encourage both these talents to the uttermost. It is possible so to chill and to discourage the productive faculties in our Church as that its assaying faculty shall have no samples on which to sit in judgment.

[There follows a further plea for those who plough as well as for those whose only instrument of husbandry is the pruning-hook; for those who are familiar with the heart-truths of the gospel, even if they cannot read Hebrew and Greek. Trained theologians should inspect the labor of unlettered but vital workers, but they should not put a stop to it. A clergyman should not lay an interdict upon a host of Christian agency of those who may be beneath him in literature but far before him in the instrumental power of making Christians. It is not

by lectures on law and politics that a restless and lawless population can be induced to become good citizens, but rather by the presence among them of some who, in their own character, realize the worth and the practical wisdom of the good citizen.]

The simple presence of a man, humble it may be in rank, but richly endowed either with Christian or with constitutional benevolence—it is this, unaccompanied with all metaphysical discernment or the power of metaphysical explanation, that will do more to expel the spirit of rancor from a neighborhood, and to substitute the spirit of charity in its place, than any theoretical exposition of principles or processes can possibly accomplish. It is not the man that best lectures on the operation of the moving force, but the man who is possessed of the moving force, and actually wields it . . . it is he who works the practical consequence on the temper and mind of the neighborhood over which he expatiates. And thus it is that the man of Christian love operates more powerfully as a leaven in his vicinity than the man of Christian learning; and it is altogether a mistake that a long and laborious routine of scholarship must be described ere the exertions of a Christian teacher shall, with efficacy, tell on the moral and spiritual habit of the disciples who repair to him. . . .

In every church let securities be provided for the highest attainments of Christian literature, so as that many ecclesiastics shall be found in it rich in all the deep and varied erudition of theology. We know not a nobler intellectual eminence than that which may be

gained on the neglected walks of sound and Scriptural philosophy by one who, with a mind stored both in the criticism and antiquities of his profession, further knows how to impregnate his acquisitions with the liberal and experimental spirit of our age, and who, without commuting the orthodoxy of God's imperishable record, could so far modernize the science of which he was, at the same time, both the champion and the ornament, as to evolve upon the world, not its new truths, but its new applications. Christianity never changes, but the complexion and habits of the species are always changing; and thus may there be an exhaustless novelty both of remark and illustration in our intellectual treatment of a science which touches at almost every point on the nature of man, and bears with decisive effect on the whole frame and economics of civil society.

But it were giving the last finish to the character of his mind if, amid the pride and the prowess of its rare accomplishments, he could appreciate aright the piety and the practical labors of an unlettered Christian; and it would confer upon him that very thing which is so touching in the simplicity of Newton, or in the missionary zeal and devotedness of Boyle, if, while surrounded by the trophies of his own successful authorship, he could be made to see that, however profound in the didactics of Christianity, yet, in the actual work of giving a personal spread to Christianity, there is many an humble man of privacy and of prayer who is far before him.

There are two sets of clergy in every Establishment,

and it were curious to observe how each of them stands affected to the two questions, whether the ministers of the gospel shall be more richly furnished with Christian literature, and whether the laymen who are under them shall be permitted to supplement the duties of the clerical office with Christian labor. There is one class of our ecclesiastics, both in England and Scotland, who have a taste for popular agency and lay enterprises and the whole apparatus of religious schools and religious societies, which are so multiplying around us in this busy age of philanthropic activity and adventure. Now, what we would ask of such ecclesiastics is whether they would feel a relish or repugnance toward those measures, the effect of which is to exhort the clergy of the Church to a higher pre-eminence than they even now occupy, for all the accomplishments of sacred literature? Will they come forward and say that they are afraid of literature? that a clergy too enlightened would not suit them? that, loving to breathe in the muddy atmosphere of popular ignorance and popular folly, they want no science and no scholarship, whose hateful beams might disperse the congenial vapors wherewith the effervescence of plebeianism has filled and overspread the whole scene of their ignoble labors? Do they tremble lest the light of philosophy should penetrate into the dark unknown of their own inglorious skulking places? And are they really conscious, after all, that what they have headed and patronized is a low, paltry, drivelling fanaticism, which would shrink before the full gaze of a lettered and intellectual Church, where every minister were

a luminary of science as well as a luminary of the gospel? These are the degrading imputations they will bring upon themselves by any resistance they shall make to the learning of the clergy; and such resistance, if offered, is the very thing that will propagate the timely alarm to another quarter, and will cause, we trust, the friends of learning to rally and to form into strength elsewhere. Those ministers who, whether under the name of the high church, or of the moderate, or of the rational party, feel a strong disrelish toward the active interference of laymen in the work of religious instruction, will know how to act should they perceive, in the party of their antagonists, an equally strong disrelish toward any measure that goes to augment the professional literature of all our future ecclesiastics. They cannot be blind to the fact that, at this moment, there is a fermentation, and a brooding activity, and an unexampled restlessness, and a busy movement of schemes and of operations, before unknown in the walks of popular Christianity; and if, additional to all this, they should further see a dread on the part of zealous champions and overseers lest the lamp of Christian literature should be lighted up into greater brilliancy than before, we trust that this will be felt and understood by those who nauseate what they term the missionary and methodistical spirit of our age as the intimation of what they ought to do. It is not by putting forth the arm of intolerance that they will reach it its exterminating blow. . . . These are not the legitimate defences of our Church against hateful fanaticism; and they who have

set themselves in array against this hydra, whether she be indeed a reality or only a bugbear of their own imagination, can do nothing better than to rear a literary and enlightened priesthood, under the eye of whose vigilance all that is truly noxious and evil will be most effectually disarmed.

But should the friends of this so-called fanaticism among the clergy be also the friends, and not the enemies, of scientific and theological accomplishment in their own order; should they dare their antagonists to the open arena of light and liberty; should their demand be that the torch of learning shall be blown into a clearer and intenser flame, and be brought to shine upon all their opinions and all their ways; should the cry which they send forth be for more of erudition and more of philosophy, and that not one single laborer shall be admitted to the ministerial field till our universities, those established luminaries of our land, have shed upon his understanding a larger supply of that pure and chaste and academic light, the property of which is to guide, and not to bewilder, to clarify the eye of the mind, and not to dazzle it to the overpowering of all its faculties; if this be the beseeching voice of fanaticism, and it be left to pass unregarded away, then shall the enemies of fanaticism have become the enemies of knowledge; and our Church, instead of exhibiting the aspect of zeal tempered by wisdom, and of a warm, active, busy spirit of Christian philanthropy under the control and guardianship of accomplished and well educated clergymen, may at length, desolated of all its pieties, be turned into a

heartless scene of secularity and coarseness and contempt for vital religion, where the sacredness of Christianity has fled and left not behind it one redeeming quality in the science of Christianity among its officiating ministers; and, alike abandoned by the light of the Divine Spirit and the light of human philosophy, it will offer the spectacle of a dreary and extended waste, without one spot of loveliness or verdure which the eye can delight to rest upon.

[It was objected to the Sabbath-school that it detaches the young from family worship and the sacred influences of domestic piety. There follows this powerful plea for the institution:]

Is it possible for any man at all acquainted with the chronology of Sabbath-schools to affirm that they are the instruments of having overthrown the family religion of Scotland? Have they operated as so many ruthless invaders on what, at the time of their entrance, was a beauteous moral domain, and swept away from it all that was affecting or graceful in the observations of our forefathers? Whether did they desolate the territory, or have they only made their lodgment on what was already a scene of desolation? The truth is that for many years previous to the extension of this system, a woful degeneracy was going on in the religious habit and character of our country; that, from the wanton outrages inflicted by unrelenting patronage on the taste and demand of parishes, the religious spirit, once so characteristic of our nation, has long been rapidly sub-

siding; that, more particularly in our great towns, the population have so outgrown the old ecclesiastical system, as to have accumulated there into so many masses of practical heathenism:—and now the state of the alternative is not whether the rising generation shall be trained to Christianity in schools, or trained to it under the roof of their fathers, but whether they shall be trained to it in schools or not trained to it at all. It is whether a process of deterioration which originated more than half a century ago, and has been rapid and resistless in its various tendencies ever since, whether it shall be suffered to carry our people still more downward in the scale of moral blindness and depravity, or whether the only remaining expedient for arresting it shall be put into operation. Were it as easy a task to prevail on an irreligious parent to set up the worship and instruction of religion in his family, as to get his consent, and prevail upon his children to attend the ministrations of a Sabbath-school, there might then be some appearance of room for all the obloquy that has been cast upon these institutions. But as the matter stands, in many a city and in many a parish, the Christian philanthropist is shut up to an effort upon the young as his last chance for the moral regeneration of our country. In despair (and it is a despair warranted by all experience) of operating with extensive effect on the confirmed habit and obstinacy of manhood, he arrests the human plant at an earlier and more susceptible stage, and puts forth the only hand that ever would have offered for the culture and the training of this young immortal. In the great majority

of instances he does not withdraw his pupils, for a single moment, from any Christian influence that would have descended upon them in another quarter, but showers upon their heads and their hearts the only Christian influence they ever are exposed to. He is, in fact, building up again that very system with the destruction of which he has been charged, and rearing many young who, but for him, would have been the still more corrupt descendants of a corrupt parentage, to be the religious guides and examples of a future generation. . . .

Parents, in spite of themselves, feel an interest in that which interests and occupies their children, and through the medium of natural affection have their thoughts been caught to the subject of Christianity; and the very tasks and exercises of their children have brought a theme to their evening circle, upon which, aforetimes, not a syllable of utterance was ever heard; and still more, when a small and select library is attached to the institution, has it been the means of circulating, through many a household privacy, such wisdom and such piety as were indeed new visitants upon a scene till now untouched by any print or footstep of sacredness. . . .

[It would not be wise to provide Sabbath-schools merely for the children of irreligious families, for then even these, being marked out as singular and inferior, would cease to attend a place whose pupils were known to be socially inferior. The Sabbath-school can, with all safety to the children of the better families, bring all together under the care of teachers, so that the higher

influences of a neighborhood are brought into saving contact with all others, to the common advantage. An argument *ad hominem* is introduced in reply to those who objected to lay teaching and yet decry the Sabbath-school because it interferes, as they assert, with family instruction.]

By admitting the competency of parents to teach Christianity to their children they admit that part of this work, at least, may be confided to other hands than those of regular and ordained clergy. They admit that a father in humble life may be the instrument of transmitting Christian wisdom and Christian worth to his own children, and that, though it were quackery for each parent to undertake the cure of family diseases, it is not quackery for each to undertake the work of family instruction. Thus the comparison between the efforts of the unlicensed in theology and medicine is, by them at least, practically given up. We hold this to be a signal testimony, and from the mouths of adversaries, too, to the power of unlettered Christianity, in propagating its own likeness throughout the young of our rising generation—a power which most assuredly would not all go to dissipation, though for a short time every Sabbath evening it were transported from its place in the family to a new place in such a seminary of religious instruction as we have attempted to advocate.

[Persons in humble circumstances, even without the prestige of social rank, have a certain advantage in Sabbath-school teaching, since they do not excite any mer-

cenary expectations in the poor, and are regarded for their character alone.]

This holds out a brilliant moral perspective to the eye of the philanthropist. In a few years many of the scholars at our present seminaries will be convertible into the teachers of a future generation. There will be indefinite additions made to our religious agency. Instead of having to assail, as now, the general bulk of the population by a Christian influence from without, the mass itself will be penetrated, and, through the means of residing and most effective teachers, there will be kept up a busy process of internal circulation. It is thus that he who can work patiently at small things, and be content to wait for great things, lends by far the best contribution to the mighty achievement of regenerating our land. Extremes meet, and the sanguine philanthropist, who is goaded on by his impatience to try all things and look for some great and immediate result, will soon be plunged into the despair of ever being able to do anything at all. The man who can calmly set himself down to the work of a district school, and there be satisfied to live and to labor without a name, may germinate a moral influence that will at length overspread the whole city of his habitation. . . .

A single lane or court in London is surely not more impracticable than in other towns of this empire. There is one man to be found there who can assume it as his locality and acquit himself thoroughly and well of the duties it lays upon him. There is another who can pitch

beside him, on a contiguous settlement, and, without feeling bound to speculate for the whole metropolis, can pervade and do much to purify his assumed portion of it. There is a third who will find that a walk so unnoticed and obscure is the best suited to his modesty, and a fourth who will be eager to reap, on the same field, that reward of kind and simple gratitude in which his heart is most fitted to rejoice. . . . So long as a man of mediocrity conceives himself to be a man of might, and sighs after some scene of enlargement that may be adequate to his fancied powers, little or nothing will be done; but as soon as the sweeping and sublime imagination is dissipated, and he can stoop to the drudgery of his small allotment in the field of usefulness, then will it be found how it is by the summation of many humble mediocrities that a mighty result is at length arrived at. . . .

In this laborious process of nursing an empire to Christianity we know not at present a readier or more available apparatus of means than that which has been raised by methodism. In every large town of England it owns a number of disciples, and, through a skilful mechanism that has been long in operation, there is a minute acquaintance on the part of their leaders with the talents and character of each of them. Why should not they avail themselves of their existing facilities for the adoption of this system, and so thoroughly pervade that population by their Sabbath-schools, which they only as yet have partially drawn to their pulpits? It would be doing more, in the long run, to renovate and multiply

the chapels of methodism than all that has yet been devised by them; and thus might they both extend religious education among the young and a church-going habit throughout the general population. We doubt not that with this new style of tactics they would mightily alarm the Establishment. But so much the better. This is just the salutary application which the Establishment stands in need of. And, from all that we have learned of the catholic and liberal spirit of this class of dissenters, we guess that, though they did no more than simply stimulate the Church of England to do the whole work, and to do it aright, they would bless God and rejoice.

Such is the good-will we bear to sectarianism that we should rejoice in nothing more than to behold their instantaneous adoption of an expedient which, we honestly believe, would add tenfold to their resources and their influence. Let them operate in large towns on the principle of locality. Let them enter on the territorial possession of this peopled wilderness. Let them erect as many district schools and district chapels as they find that they have room for; and if the Establishment will not be roused by this manifold activity out of its lethargies, then sectarianism will at length earn, and most rightfully earn, all the honors and all the ascendency of an Establishment. It is, indeed, a most likely thing that the Church would be put into motion; and this of itself were an important good rendered to the country by the industry and zeal of dissenters. But when we look to the fearful deficiency of our ecclesiastical sys-

tem there is no fear lest all the galley-boats of sectarianism, with the slow and ponderous Establishment in tow, will soon overtake the mighty extent of our yet unprovided population. Nor do we know of any common enterprise that would promise fairer, at length, for embodying the Church and the dissenters together by some such act of comprehensive union as has lately reflected so much honor on the two most numerous classes of dissenters in our country.

END OF VOL. I

CHAPTER IX

ON THE RELATION THAT SUBSISTS BETWEEN THE CHRISTIAN AND THE CIVIC ECONOMY OF LARGE TOWNS

[THE author here summarizes the preceding argument and urges that in each parish the residents of that parish be given the preference in letting vacant pews, so that gradually all the attendants would be neighbors affected by "the principle of locality." The churches would be filled up by pastoral labor, and not merely by pulpit attraction. He is not sanguine that city officials will appreciate the argument and take the wise and necessary measures for improvement. The custom of giving the preference to rich men outside of a parish, instead of to the poor men in it, had already led to that neglect of religion which menaced the Christianity and order of Scottish cities. The danger in a State Church is that "her best and dearest interests happen to lie at the disposal of men who have neither the heart to care for the success of a generous enterprise nor the talent to appreciate it."]

It is much better for the right Christian economy of a town when the rule of parochial equity in seat-letting tends to the disappointment of capitalists than to the disappointment of laborers. By the former disappointment an effective interest is created in behalf of more

churches; and the inconvenience of a limited accommodation is made to fall upon those who are most able to remedy and extend it; and these wealthy outcasts can form into a powerful body of application for an additional church, so that to reject the application of the wealthy in favor of the poor is to walk in that direct line which leads to the increase of our ecclesiastical provision in great cities. Whereas to reject the applications of the poor in favor of the wealthy is just to reverse this process. It is to make irrecoverable outcasts of those who are without the means of at all helping themselves. It is to damp into irrecoverable apathy the whole class of society to which they belong. . . . It is thus that men who are the very first to tremble at the outbreakings of radicalism may lie the most deeply chargeable with the guilt of having fed and sustained it in principle; withholding, as they do, the best counteraction to all the brooding elements of a fiery and mischievous fermentation. . . .

[It is true that only a part of those who come under the preaching of the ministry give clear evidence of a real and vital Christianity in their lives; but, so far as men are thus affected, it is exactly through the most carefully devised and thoroughly administered local agencies that this most desirable result is to be attained.]

By subdividing parishes we just multiply these pathways, and by localizing parishes we just make the pathways shorter and more convenient and accessible than before. We do not set aside the doctrine of a

spiritual influence, for we believe that it is this which will be the primary and the essential agent in that great moral regeneration that awaits our species. But just as in the irrigating processes of Egypt the reservoirs are constructed, and the furrows are drawn, and every field on the banks of the Nile is put into readiness for the coming inundation, so we, knowing that the spirit maketh its passage into the human heart by the word and the ordinances of the gospel, are just laboring at a right process of spiritual irrigation when we provide such arrangements as will bring the greatest number of human beings into broadest and most recurring contact with this word and with these ordinances.

But at present we have it still more at heart to propitiate our mere civil and political philanthropists to the cause of a right ecclesiastical system for cities. And the argument we would urge upon them is that, under such a system, the civic benefit which they most care for is both anterior in regard of time, and greatly more extended in regard of diffusion, than the Christian benefit about which, we fear, they are much less solicitous. . . . He who is most qualified for the Christian good of turning some from darkness to spiritual light, is also most qualified for the civic good of turning many from their habits of Sabbath riot and Sabbath profanation to, at least, a personal attendance on the services of Christianity. . . . Conceive one family in humble and operative life, trained, though it may only be to the outward regularities of a Christian Sabbath, and taking respectable occupancy of its own pew, where it exhibits

the domestic group of well-doing parents and well-disciplined children, each exchanging on that day the garb of citizenship for the becoming holiday attire, which thrift and management have enabled them to provide; and retained in constant attendance on the lessons of a minister from whom, if they do not inhale the vital spirit, they will at least imbibe, though perhaps insensibly, somewhat of the sedate and moral tone of Christianity, and be strengthened in their taste for the decencies of even-going citizenship. May we not read on the very aspect of such a family the indications of virtue and order and industry through the week, and a manifest superiority in all these attributes over another family that spends its Sabbaths recklessly and at large? It is certainly not from families of a right Sabbatical habit that popular violence will draw the aliment by which it is upholden, for it is a habit which holds no alliance whatever with dissipation or idleness or discontent.

It is a sad contemplation to him whose heart is occupied with the weight and reality of eternal things that out of so vast a population a mere handful of converts may be the whole fruit of a lengthened and laborious incumbency. And yet it is an experimental truth, that in respect of temporal and immediate good the whole population may be sensibly bettered by the ever recurring presence of an affectionate pastor in the midst of them. The primary impulse, it is true, on which he sets out among his people is the good of their immortality; and in the occasional fulfilment of this high errand he finds his encouragement and reward. But he scatters

abroad, and far more largely, among the families another good, which, though but of secondary and subordinate importance in his eyes, is enough to stamp him, in the estimation of every civil and political ruler, as by far the most useful servant of the community. There is a substantial, though unnoticed, charm in the visit of a superior. There is a felt compliment in his attentions, which raises an emotion in the breast, the very opposite of that disdainful sentiment toward the higher orders of society that is now of such alarming prevalence among our operative population. There is a real contribution made to the earthly moralities of the poor man by the consciousness of that friendly tie which unites him in an acquaintanceship that is ever growing with the minister of his parish. The very aim that is made by the people to afford him a decent reception, in the cleanliness of their houses and the dress of their children, is not to be overlooked in our estimate of the bland and beneficial influences that accompany his frequent reiterations over the face of his allotted vineyard.

It both serves to spread this moral cement and forms a mighty addition to its quantity when the minister, by means of a well-appointed eldership, can multiply among his people the number of their Christian friends who enter their abodes and take a kindly interest in their families. . . .

[The building up of local centres of sympathy, acquaintance, and interests would do much to assuage the riotous tendencies which sometimes sweep over a city.]

It is the distance between the ruler and his subjects which, whether in the unwieldy State or in the unwieldy metropolis, leaves room for those dark and brooding imaginations that are so apt to fret and infuriate into a storm. The more that this distance is alleviated by the subdivisions of locality, the more do the charities of a common companionship mingle in the commotion, and exude an oil upon the waters, that assuages their violence.

Sabbath-school teachers, above others, have a direct opportunity to observe the refining and elevating effect of intimate and friendly contact with the poor.

We must not omit the fine remark of Wilberforce respecting the power of Christianity to elevate the general standard of morals, even in countries where it has failed of positively converting more than a very small proportion of the inhabitants. The direct good which Christianity does is when it stamps the impress of its doctrine on the few whom it makes to be the living epistles of Christ Jesus. But they are epistles which, to use the language of Holy Writ, may be seen and read of all men. Society at large may not be able to appreciate the hidden principle of the evangelical life; but they can, at least, peruse the inscription of its visible graces and virtues, and can render them the homage both of their full esteem and of their partial imitation. . . .

This is a process the *rationale* of which might be obvious enough, even to a mere earthly understanding, and so might the power and the charm of locality; and so might the effect of one Christian's example in raising

the standard of morality among many who are not Christians; and so might the tendency of Sabbath-schooling, both to induce a more orderly and civilized habit among the young and to strengthen the tie of kindliness between the teachers and the taught, or between the higher and lower ranks of the community. There is not surely of the mystic or unsubstantial in any of these influences; and if, nevertheless, they be the most faithful stewards of the mysteries of God, from whom they are most ready to descend on the families of our general population, there ought to be an indication here to our men of political ascendency, whether in the State or city corporation, of what that is which forms our best and cheapest defence against the evils of a rude and lawless and profligate community.

CHAPTER X

ON THE BEARING WHICH A RIGHT CHRISTIAN ECONOMY HAS UPON PAUPERISM

We are able to affirm, on the highest of all authorities, that the poor shall be with us always; or, in other words, that it is vain to look for the extinction of poverty from the world. And yet we hold it both desirable and practicable to accomplish the extinction of pauperism; so that between the state of poverty and that of pauperism there must be a distinction which, to save confusion, ought to be kept in mind and to be clearly apprehended. The epithet poor has a far wider range of application than among the lower orders of the community. We may speak, and speak rightly, of a poor nobleman, or a poor bishop, or a poor baronet. It is enough to bring down the epithet on any individual that out of his earnings or property he is not able to maintain himself in the average style of comfort that obtains throughout the class of society to which he belongs. The earl who cannot afford a carriage, and the laborer who cannot afford the fare and the clothing of our general peasantry, however different their claims to our sympathy may be, by being currently termed poor are both made to share alike in this designation.

To be poor is primarily to be in want; and even though the want should be surely provided for by the kindness of neighbors, yet is the epithet still made to rest on the individual who originally wore it. . . . The condition of poverty, arising from a defect of power or of means on the part of him who occupies it, will ever, we apprehend, be a frequent circumstance in society; while the wants of poverty, arising from a defect in the care of relatives or in the humanity of friends and observers, will, we trust, at length be exclusively done away. . . .

A poor man is a man in want of adequate means for his own subsistence. *A pauper is a man who has this want supplemented, in whole or part, out of a legal or compulsory provision.* He would not be a pauper by having the whole want supplied to him out of the kindness of neighbors, or from the gratuitous allowance of an old master, or from any of the sources of voluntary charity. It is by having relief legally awarded to him, out of money legally raised, that he becomes a pauper. . . .

[This definition of pauperism calls attention to the merely external *legal* relation. It does not suggest that deep physical and spiritual degradation which marks great numbers as a broken and degenerate class, parasites, and beggars. In this deeper sense many who receive legal aid are not paupers (in character), and some who are supported by friends are actually paupers—some even in rich and respectable families. This distinction goes deeper than the discussion of Chalmers, and is brought out by biology and anthropology.]

But the truth is that the invention of pauperism, had it been successful, would have gone to annihilate the state of poverty as well as its sufferings. A man cannot be called poor who has a legal right, on the moment that he touches the borders of indigence, to demand that his descending progress shall be arrested and he shall be upheld in a sufficiency of aliment for himself and his family. The law, in fact, has vested him with a property in the land which he can turn to account so soon as he treads on the confines of poverty; and had this desire been as effective as was hoped and intended, a state of poverty would have been impossible. . . . The truth is that pauperism has neither done away the condition of poverty nor alleviated the evils of it. This attempt of legislation to provide all with a right of protection from the miseries of want has proved vain and impotent, and leaves a strong likelihood behind it that a more real protection would have been afforded had the case been abandoned to the unforced sympathies of our nature, and had it been left to human compassion to soften the wretchedness of a state against the existence of which no artifice of human policy seems to be at all available.

[While the influences of Christian faith are very helpful in stimulating private benevolence and redeeming the poor from degrading habits of dependence, yet the mere abolition of a legal provision for poverty would be enough of itself to call forth the charity of the prosperous and the resources of self-help among the unfortunate.]

The first, and by far the most productive of these fountains, is situated among the habits and economies of the people themselves. It is impossible but that an established system of pauperism must induce a great relaxation on the frugality and providential habits of our laboring classes. It is impossible but that it must undermine the incentives to accumulation, and, by leading the people to repose that interest on a public provision which would else have been secured by the effects of their own prudence and their own carefulness, it has dried up far more abundant resources in one quarter than it has opened in another. We know not a more urgent principle of our constitution than self-preservation; and it is a principle which not only shrinks from present suffering, but which looks onward to futurity and holds up a defence against the apprehended wants and difficulties of the years that are to come. Were the great reservoir of public charity for the town at large to be shut, there would soon be struck out many family reservoirs, fed by the thrift and sobriety which necessity would then stimulate, but which now the system of pauperism so long has superseded; and from these there would emanate a more copious supply than is at present ministered out of poor rates to aliment the evening of plebeian life and to equalize all the vicissitudes of its history.

The second fountain which pauperism has a tendency to shut, and which its abolition would reopen, is the kindness of relatives. One of the most palpable, and at the same time most grievous, effects of this artificial

system is the dissipation which it has made of the ties and feelings of relationship. It is this which gives rise to the melancholy list of runaway parents, wherewith whole columns of the provincial newspapers of England are oftentimes filled. And then, as if in retaliation, there is the cruel abandonment of parents by their own offspring to the cold and reluctant hand of public charity. . . .

A third fountain on which pauperism has set one of its strongest seals, and which would instantly be unlocked on the abolition of the system, is the sympathy of the wealthier for the poorer classes of society. It has transformed the whole character of charity by turning a matter of love into a matter of litigation, and so has seared and shut many a heart out of which the spontaneous emanations of good-will would have gone plentifully forth among the abodes of the destitute. We know not how a more freezing arrest can be laid on the current of benevolence than when it is met in the tone of a rightful and, perhaps, indignant demand for that wherewith it was ready, on its own proper impulse, to pour refreshment and relief over the whole field of ascertained wretchedness. There is a mighty difference of effect between an imperative and an imploring application. The one calls out the jealousy of our nature and puts us upon the attitude of surly and determined resistance. The other calls out the compassion of our nature and inclines us to the free and willing movements of generosity. . . .

But there is still another fountain that we hold to be

greatly more productive even than the last, both in respect to the amount of relief that is yielded by it and also in respect to the more fit and timely accommodation wherewith it suits itself to the ever varying accidents and misfortunes of our common humanity. There is a local distance between the wealthy and the poor which is unfavorable to the operation of the last fountain, but this is amply compensated in the one we are about to specify;—and some may be surprised when we intimate that of far superior importance to the sympathy of the rich for the poor do we hold to be the sympathy of the poor for one another. In the veriest depths of unmixed and extended plebeianism, and where, for many streets together, not one house is to be seen which indicates more than the rank of a common laborer, are there feelings of mutual kindness and capabilities of mutual aid that greatly outstrip the conceptions of a hurried and superficial observer. And but for pauperism, which has released immediate neighbors from the feeling they would otherwise have had, that in truth the most important benefactors of the poor are the poor themselves, there had been a busy internal operation of charity in these crowded lanes and densely peopled recesses that would have proved a more effectual guarantee against the starvation of any individual than ever can be reared by any of the artifices of human policy. One who has narrowly looked to some of these vicinities and witnessed the small but numerous contributions that pour in upon a family whose distresses have attracted observation, and seen how food, and service, and fuel

are rendered in littles from neighbors that have been drawn, by a kind of moral gravitation, to the spot where disease and destitution hold out their most impressive aspect; and has arithmetic withal for comparing the amount of these unnoticed items with the whole produce of that more visible beneficence which is imported from abroad and scattered by the hand of affluence over the district—we say that such an observer will be sure to conclude that, after all, the best safeguards against the horrors of extreme poverty have been planted by the hand of nature in the very region of poverty itself; that the numerous though scanty rivulets, which have their rise within its confines, do more for the refreshment of its more desolate places than would the broad streams that may be sent forth upon it from the great reservoir of pauperism. . . . Should pauperism be abolished, let but humanity abide in all the wonted attributes and sympathies which belong to her, and we may be sure that for the supplies which issued from the storehouse of public charity there would be ample compensation in the breaking out of those manifold lesser charities that never fail to be evolved when human suffering is brought into contact with human observation. . . .

[This word " observation " suggests one of the strongest objections to Chalmer's method. The rich do not live near the poor, do not observe them, do not know or feel their sufferings, and so escape the appeal of visible misery. Therefore an undue and unjust part of the burden of relief would fall precisely where the resources are feeblest, on the poor neighbors. The present-day charity

organization societies and social settlements are aware of this difficulty, and seek to meet it, at least in part, by a system of friendly visiting and actual residence among the poor. The " principle of locality," especially in very large cities, must not be carried to an absurd extreme. To the touching illustration of noble kindness in humble places may be added the fine passages in Charles Sumner's oration, " The True Grandeur of Nations."]

There is a statement made by Mr. Buxton, in his valuable work upon prisons, which is strongly illustrative of the force of human sympathy. In the jail of Bristol, the allowance of bread to the criminals is beneath the fair rate of human subsistence, and to the debtors there is no allowance at all, leaving these last to be provided for by their own proper resources or by the random charity of the town. It has occasionally happened that both these securities have failed them, and that some of their number would inevitably have perished of hunger had not the criminals, rather than endure the spectacle of so much agony, given a part of their own scanty allowance, and so shared in the suffering along with them. It is delightful to remark that the sympathy of humble life, instead of the frail and imaginative child of poetry, is a plant of such sturdy endurance as to survive even the roughest of those processes by which a human being is conducted to the last stages of depravity. Now if the working of this good principle may thus be detected among the veriest outcasts of human society, shall we confide nothing to its operation among the people and the families of ordinary life? . . .

It will be seen, then, that we do not hold a good Christian economy to be indispensable to the negation of pauperism. We think that simply upon the absence of this system from any country there will be in it less of unrelieved poverty than when the system is in full establishment and operation. . . .

[For the actual facts in respect to suffering under the voluntary and under the legal systems in Great Britain, see Lamond, "The Scottish Poor Laws." Chalmers seemed to be unable to consider legal relief as a true expression of the benevolence of a community.]

We cannot affirm that never in any instance would there be a remainder of want unprovided for, but we are strongly persuaded that it would fall infinitely short of the want which is now unreached and unrelieved by all the ministrations of legalized charity. And we reckon that this argument would hold, even apart from Christianity, on the mere play of those natural principles of self-preservation and social and relative sympathy which are inseparable from the human constitution. So that in Constantinople the condition of the people would be economically worse were pauperism introduced among them, and in London the condition of the people would, at this moment, have been economically better had pauperism never been instituted. . . . There may occur a very rare instance of positive starvation; but let it never be forgotten that instances also occur in the British metropolis, and we do think it more likely to happen there just because of pauperism, which has substituted the tardy

and circuitous process of a court of administration for the prompt and timely compassions of an immediate neighborhood. . . .

But though it were utterly misconceiving the truth and philosophy of the whole subject to affirm that Christianity was indispensable, yet there is a way in which it acts as an element of mighty power and importance in this department of human affairs. It is most true that nature, when simply left to the development of her own spontaneous and inborn principles, will render a better service to humanity than can be done by the legal charity of England; but it is also true that Christianity urges this development still further, and so gives an augmented and overpassing sufficiency to nature. . . . The man who is a Christian will be the most ready to labor with his own hands rather than be burdensome; and, if he have dependent relatives, he will be the most ready to provide for those of his own house and of his own kindred; and, if he be rich, he will be the most willing to distribute and ready to communicate; and, if he be poor, still, with his humble mite, will he aspire after the blessing that is promised to a giver, and shun, to the uttermost, the condition of a receiver. Christianity does not originate the principles in society, but Christianity adds prodigiously to the power and intenseness of their operation. . . .

We have, under a good parochial economy, other and perhaps more powerful securities for an ample compensation being rendered to human want should pauperism be done away. Out of the mingling and acquaintance-

ship that would ensue among the various orders of society, there were a greatly more honorable feeling that would arise in the breasts of the poor and uphold them in their generous stand against the humiliations of public charity. The homage rendered to the dignity of each household by the annual presence of the minister, and the more frequent visitations of his parochial agents, were not without its efficacy in rearing a preventive barrier to stop the descent and the degradation of many families. When the rich go forth on a plebeian territory, in the ostensible capacity of almoners, we are aware what the character of that stout and clamorous reaction is which is sure to come back upon them. But let them go forth on those topics of our common nature which tend to assimilate all the ranks of life; let education, or piety, or friendship be the occasion of those short but frequent interviews, where the inequalities of condition are for the time forgotten; let Christian philanthropy, for which a right parochial apparatus would give such ample scope and exercise, guide the footsteps of our official men to the humblest of our city habitations, and there suggest, in conversation, all that sense and sympathy can devise for the immortal well-being of the inmates; though these applications should fail, in many thousand instances, of their direct and primary design, yet let them be repeated and kept up and one result will be sure to come out of them—a more erect, and honorable, and high-minded population, less able than before to brook the exposure of their necessities to the observation of another, and more strenuous

than before in sustaining their respectability on that loftier platform to which they have been admitted by the ennobling intercourse of their superiors in society. . . . The system of locality, when carried into effect, not only exposes the people to the view of their superiors, but it exposes them more fully and more frequently to the view of each other. One sure result of this system is that it supplies contiguous families with common places of resort, as the parish church and the parish schools; and furnishes them with objects of common interest and attention, as their minister or the Sabbath-school teachers of their children; and groups the inhabitants of small vicinities into occasional domestic assemblages, as when the minister performs his annual round of household ministrations, or, under the fostering care of himself and his agents, the more religious of the district hold their weekly meetings for the exercises of piety. It is unavoidable that, with such processes as these, a closer and more manifold acquaintanceship shall grow up in every immediate neighborhood, and that moral distance which now obtains, even among families in a state of juxtaposition, shall be greatly reduced; and the people will live more under the view and within the observation of the little besetting public wherewith the ties of fellowship are now more strengthened and multiplied than before; and this, independently of all Christian and all civic virtue, will bring the natural pride of character into alliance with those various habits which go to counteract the vice and the misery of pauperism. The consciousness of a nearer

and more impending regard than is now directed toward them would make them all more resolute to shun the degradation of charity and the obloquy they would incur by a shameful abandonment of their relatives, and even that certain stigma which would be affixed to them were the liberality of some open-hearted neighbor eulogized in their hearing and they felt themselves to suffer by the comparison. . . .

There is an utter inadvertency to the laws of our universal nature on the part of those who think that in the humblest circles of plebeianism there is not the operation of the very same principles which may be witnessed in the higher circles of fashionable life. There is a style of manner and appearance that is admired among the poor, and which, when introduced by one of the families, constitutes it the leader of a fashion that is apt to be emulated by all the others. There is a certain *bon ton* by which the average feeling of every district is represented; and nothing contributes more powerfully to raise it than the residence of an individual whose attention to the duties of his station has kept him nobly and manfully afloat above the degradations of charity. The infection of such an example spreads among the neighbors. What he shuns from principle they spurn at from pride; and thus the very envies and jealousies of the human heart go to augment our confidence, that should the economy of pauperism in our cities give place to a right Christian economy there will, in the spirit and capabilities of the people themselves, be an ample compensation for all that is withdrawn from them.

We are most thoroughly aware of the incredulity wherewith all such statements are listened to by men hackneyed among the details of official business, and who hold every argument that is couched in general language, and is drawn from the principles of human nature, to be abstract and theoretical. But they should be taught that their institutional experience is not the experience which throws any light upon the real and original merits of this question; that though they have been working for years, with their fingers, among the accounts and the manipulations of city pauperism, their eyes may never, all the while, have been upon the only relevant field of observation; that, practitioners though they be, it is not at all in the tract of their deliberations or their doings where true practical wisdom is to be gotten; that the likeliest counsellor upon this subject is not the man who has travelled, however long and laboriously, over the inner department of committeeship, but the man who travels, and that on an errand distinct from common charity, over the outer department of the actual and living population. In one word, a local Sabbath teacher, with ordinary shrewdness of observation, and who meets the people free of all that disguise which is so readily assumed on every occasion of mercenary intercourse between them and their superiors, from him would we expect a greatly sounder deliverance than from the mere man of place or of penmanship, on the adequacy of the lower orders to their own comfort and their own independence. It is a sufficient reply to the charge of sanguine or visionary, which is so often advanced against

our confident affirmations upon this topic, that we invite the testimonies of all those with whom a district of plebeianism is the scene of their daily, or at least frequent, visitations. . . .

[He then shows, from actual trial in certain poor parishes of Glasgow, that his plan of appealing to the resources of the poor had been successful among Sabbath-school teachers. He urges that "pauperism" stands in the way of the moral ends of the Church.]

It is, indeed, a heavy incumbrance on the work of a clergyman, whose office it is to substitute among his people the graces of a new character for the hardness, and the selfishness, and the depraved tendencies of nature, that, in addition to the primary and essential evils of the human constitution, he has to struggle, in his holy warfare, against a system so replete as pauperism is, with all that can minister to the worst or that can wither up the best affections of our species.

[The connection between moral regeneration and the outward institutions of society he further illustrates from the example of the excise laws which fostered smuggling among a people normally honest and upright. Merely by abolishing the tax, or by an important reduction of it, this crime would disappear. Ultra-spiritualists overlook the fact that character is influenced by bad institutions.]

We hold pauperism to be a still more deadly antagonist to the morality of our nation, . . . holding forth a cup of seeming bounty, but which is charged

with a slow and insinuating poison, wherewith it has tainted the whole frame of society. . . . It is a frightful spectacle; and the heart of the Christian as well as of the civil philanthropist ought to be solemnized by it. He, of all men, should not look on with indifference while the vapor of this teeming exhalation so thickens and spreads itself throughout the whole moral atmosphere of our land. And when he witnesses the fell malignity of its operation, both on the graver and more amiable virtues of our nature; when he sees how diligence in the callings, and economy in the habits, of individuals are alike extinguished by it, and both the tendernesses of relationship and the wider charities of life are chilled and overborne, we should expect of this friend, to the higher interests of our species, that he, among all his fellows, would be most intent on the destruction of a system that so nips the best promises of spiritual cultivation and under the balefulness of whose shadow are now withering into arid decay and sure annihilation the very fairest of the fruits of righteousness.

CHAPTER XI

ON THE BEARING WHICH A RIGHT CIVIC ECONOMY HAS UPON PAUPERISM

[After repeating his assertion that all public relief is pernicious, and that charity should be left to free private care:]

The public charity of Scotland is less pernicious than that of England, only because less wide in its deviation from nature, and less hostile to the operation of those natural principles that prompt both to the care of self-preservation and to the exercise of the social and relative humanities of life. . . . The philanthropists of England are looking in the wrong quarter when, convinced of the superiority of our system, they try to discover it in the constitution of our courts of supply, or in the working and mechanism of that apparatus which they regard as so skilfully adapted for the best and fittest and most satisfying relief among the destitute. When they read of the population of a Scottish parish upheld in all the expenses of their pauperism for the sum of twenty pounds yearly, and that in many a parish of England the pauperism of an equal population costs fifteen hundred pounds, they naturally ask by what strenuousness of management it is, or by what sagacious accom-

modation of means to an end, that a thing so marvellous can be accomplished. The truth is that the administrations for the poor in the Scottish parish are not distinctly conscious of any great strenuousness or sagacity in the business. The achievement is not due to any management of theirs, but purely to the manageable nature of the subject, which is a population whose habits and whose hopes are accommodated to a state of matters where a compulsory provision for the poor is unknown.

[Allusion is made to the Scottish system of relief by the Kirk-Session from funds given as legacies or as collections at church services. The claim is made that the destitute under the voluntary system are not more numerous than where the compulsory tax system has been introduced.]

In England the money that is expended on their poor is not given, but levied. It is raised by the authority of law, and the sum thus assessed upon each parish admits of being increased with the growing exigencies of the people from whatever cause these exigencies may have arisen. As the sure result of such an economy the pauperism of England has swollen out to its present alarming dimensions; and, in many instances, the expenditure of its parishes bears the proportion of a hundred to one with the expenditure of those parishes in Scotland which are equally populous, but which still remain under the system of gratuitous administration.

Now, in most of the border parishes of Scotland, as well as in many of its large towns, there is the conjunc-

tion of these two methods. There is a fund raised by voluntary contributions at the church doors; and, to help out the supposed deficiencies of this, there is, moreover, a fund raised by legal assessment. We can thus, in Great Britain, have the advantage of beholding pauperism in all its stages, from the embryo of its first rudiments in a northern parish, through the successive steps of its progress as we travel southward, till we arrive at parishes where the property is nearly overborne by the weight of an imposition that is unknown in other countries; and where, in several instances, the property has been reduced to utter worthlessness, and so been abandoned. We can, at the same time, the better judge from this varied exhibition of the effect of pauperism on the comfort and character of those for whose welfare it was primarily instituted.

[He recommends a gradual return, by successive steps, to the former system of voluntary charity administered by parish officers. After stating the essential elements of the new system, in which all the funds for districts are heaped together in one widely advertised and conspicuous treasury, he adds:]

One evil consequence of thus uniting all the parishes of a town under the authority of one general board is that it brings out to greater ostensibility the whole economy of pauperism, and throws an air of greater magnificence and power over its administrations. . . . Pauperism would become less noxious simply by throwing it into such a form as might make it less noticeable.

For that relaxation of economy, and of the relative duties which follows in the train of pauperism, is not the proportion of what pauperism yields, but of what it is expected to yield, and therefore it is of so much importance that it be not set before the eye of the people in such characters of promise or of power as might deceive them into large and visionary expectations. . . . And it were well, not merely for the purpose of moderating and restraining the sanguine arithmetic of our native poor, that the before undivided pauperism should be parcelled out into smaller and less observable jurisdictions, but this would also have the happy effect of slackening the importation of poor from abroad. It is not by the actual produce of a public charity, but by the report and semblance of it, that we are to estimate its effect in drawing to its neighborhood those expectant families who are barely able to subsist during the period that is required to establish a legal residence and claim, thus bringing the most injurious competition, not merely on the charity itself, but overstocking the market with laborers, and so causing a hurtful depression on the general comfort of our operative population.

But, secondly, the more wide the field of superintendence is, the greater must be the moral distance between the administrators of the charity and its recipients. A separate and independent agency for each parish are in likelier circumstances for a frequent intercourse and acquaintanceship with the people of their own peculiar charge than are the members and office-bearers of a great municipal institution for the poor of a whole city. . . .

The dispensers of relief, oppressed by the weight and multiplicity of applications, and secretly conscious, at the same time, of their inability to discern aright into the merit and necessity of each of them, are apt to take refuge either in an indiscriminate facility, which will refuse nothing, or in an indiscriminate resistance, which will suffer nothing but clamors and importunities to overbear it. And, on the other hand, the claimants for relief, whom the minute inquiries of a parochial agent could easily have repressed, or his mild representations and, perhaps, friendly attentions could easily have satisfied . . . they feel no such delicacies toward the members of a stately and elevated board before whom they have preferred their stout demand, and, in safety from whose prying and patient inspection, they can make the hardy asseveration both of their necessities and of their rights. No power of scrutiny or of guardianship can make compensation for this disadvantage. No multiplication whatever of agents and office-bearers on the part of the great city establishment can raise the barrier of such an effectual vigilance against unworthy applications, as is simply provided by the ecclesiastical police of a parish, whose espionage is the fruit of a fair and frequent intercourse with the families and can carry no jealousies or heart-burnings along with it. The sure consequence of those intimate and repeated minglings which take place between the people of a parish and its deacons and elders is that a growing shame on the one side will prevent many applications which would else have been made, and that a growing command on the other over all the

details and difficulties of humble life will lead to the easy disposal of many more applications which would else have been acceded to. There may, in fact, be such a close approximation to the poor on the part of local overseers as will bring within their view those natural and antecedent capabilities for their relief and sustenance that ought, we think, to have superseded the ministrations of pauperism altogether. By urging the applicant to spirit and strenuousness in his own cause, or by remonstrating with those of his own kindred, or by the statement of his case to neighbors, or, finally, if he thought it worthy of such an exertion, by interesting a wealthy visitor in his behalf, may the Christian friend of his manageable district easily bring down a sufficiency for all its wants from those fountains of supply which were long at work ere pauperism was invented, and will again put forth their activity after pauperism is destroyed.

But these fountains are too deep and internal for the observation of legal or general overseers, nor could they bring them to act though they would on the chaos of interminable and widely scattered applications that come before them. In these circumstances they have no other resource than to meet them legally, which is tantamount, in the vast majority of instances, to meeting them combatively. . . . The sure result of every additional expenditure through the channels of an artificial pauperism do we behold the rich more desperate of doing effectual good, and the poor more dissatisfied with all that is done than before. . . .

The third objection against the system of a general superintendence over the pauperism of all the parishes, and of a general fund out of which each shall draw for its own expenditure: The imagination of a mighty and inexhaustible fund is not more sure to excite the appetite, and so to relax the frugal and providential habits of its receivers, than it is sure to relax the vigilance of its dispensers. To leave to each Session the right of sitting in judgment over the cases of its own parochial applicants, after having wrested from it its own peculiar revenue, and then to deal forth upon it from a joint stock such supplies of money as it may require for its expenditure, is the most likely arrangement that could have been devised for establishing in each parish a most lax and careless and improvident administration. . . . If we wish to see, in the business of a Kirk-Session, somewhat of the same alertness and quick-sightedness and patient attention wherewith an individual in private life looks after the business of his private affairs, we must throw it upon its own resources, and so leave it to square its own outgoings by its own incomings. It is not in human nature that any one corporation can be so tender of the funds of another as it would be of its own; nor is there a more effectual method of encouraging, in one set of administrators, a facility in the admission of new cases than to place with another set of administrators the fund for supplying them.

[After reasserting his belief that natural forces would care for all necessary relief, he turns from general theory to a particular experience with the local system:]

It were far more satisfactory that the thing be tried than that the thing be argued. . . . It is on this account that we feel disposed to estimate at so high a value the experience of Glasgow; nor are we aware of any given space on the whole domain, at least of Scottish pauperism, where a touchstone so delicate and decisive of the question could possibly be applied; and we are most confidently persuaded that if the progress of this city toward the English system could possibly be arrested then it may also be arrested with equal or greater facility in any parish of Scotland, judging that to be indeed an *experimentum crucis* which is made with such materials as an exclusively manufacturing population, and at such a time too as that of the greatest adversity which the trade of the place had ever to sustain in the history of its many fluctuations.

But it will be necessary to premise a short general account of the method in which its pauperism wont to be administered.

Each parish is divided into districts, called proportions, over which an elder is appointed, whose business it is to receive from the people belonging to it, and who are induced to become paupers, their first applications for public relief. The fund, which principally arises from the free-will offerings that are collected weekly at the church doors of the different parishes, is kept distinct from the fund that arises out of the legal assessments; so that when any application was made to the elder from his district, he had to judge whether the case was of so light a nature as that it could be met

and provided for out of the first and smallest of these funds, or whether it was a case of such magnitude as justified the immediate transmission of it to the administration of the second fund. It so happens that, excepting on rare occasions, the primary applications for relief are brought upon the fund raised by collections, and therefore come, in the first instance, under the cognizance and control of the Kirk-Session of that parish out of which the applications have arisen. So that generally at the first stage in the history of the pauper he stands connected with the Kirk-Session to which he belongs and is enrolled as one of their paupers at the monthly allowance of from two to five shillings.

It is here, however, proper to remark that the different Kirk-Sessions did not retain their own proper collections for a fund out of which they might issue their own proper disbursements, but that all the collections were thrown into one mass, subject to the control of a body of administrators, named the General Session, and made up of all the members of all the separate sessions of the city. From this reservoir, thus fed by weekly parochial contributions, there issued back again such monthly supplies upon each subordinate Session as the General Session judged to be requisite, on such regard being had, as they were disposed to give to the number and necessities of those poor that were actually on the roll of each parish. So that in as far as the administration of the voluntary fund for charity was concerned, it was conducted according to a system that had all the vices which we have already tried to enumerate, and the

mischief of which was scarcely alleviated by the occasional scrutinies that were made under the authority of the General Session for the purpose of purifying and reducing the rolls of all that pauperism which lay within the scope of their jurisdiction.

But we have already stated that even in the first instance some cases occurred of more aggravated necessity and distress than a Kirk-Session felt itself able for or would venture to undertake. These were transmitted direct to the Town Hospital, a body vested with the administration of the compulsory fund, raised by legal assessment throughout the city for the purpose of supplementing that revenue which is gathered at the church door and which, with a few trifling additions from other sources, constitutes the sole public aliment of the poor in the great majority of our Scottish parishes. There were only, however, a small number who found their way to the Town Hospital without taking their middle passage to it by the Kirk-Session; so that the main host of that pauperism which made good its entry on the compulsory fund came not directly and at once from the population, but through those parochial bodies of administration for the voluntary fund, whose cases, as they either multiplied in number or became more aggravated in kind, were transferred from their own rolls to those of this other institution. This transference took place when the largest sum awarded by the Session was deemed not sufficient for the pauper, who, as he became older and more necessitous, was recommended for admittance on their ampler fund to the weekly committee of the

Town Hospital. So that each Session might have been regarded as having two doors, one of them a door of admittance from the population who stand at the margin of pauperism, and another of them a door of egress to the Town Hospital, through which the occupiers of the outer court made their way to the inner temple. The Sessions, in fact, were the feeders or conductors by which the Town Hospital received its pauperism, that, after lingering awhile on this path of conveyance, was impelled onward to the farther extremity, and was at length thrust into the bosom of the wealthier institution by the pressure that constantly accumulated behind it.

[Under this system, which made access to the city fund so easy, pauperism trebled in a few years. Chalmers thought that a better way would be to leave to each district Session the funds collected in its district and to make that Session responsible alone for all its paupers. This would simplify their duties and increase a sense of their responsibility and power. All the old paupers would be assisted, until their death, from the general fund, and all new cases would be left to each local parish, without assistance from the wealthy parishes.

The American reader will see at once that in our cities this would mean that the rich residents of the boulevards would be almost absolutely freed from the duty of helping the families of the dependent poor, and that this system would roll the entire burden upon those who already have enough to do to keep the wolf from entering their own homes. Evidently Dr. Chalmers believed that the time would soon come when there would be very few of the poor who would need or ask for help,

and that the burden would be comparatively light. He expressly resists the suggestion that the rich parishes should send of their superfluity to the poorer parishes, lest this method should excite a "rapacious expectancy on the part of the people."]

Pauperism is a bugbear which shrinks and vanishes almost into nothing before the touch of a stricter inquiry and a closer personal intercourse with the families.

They will find that by every new approach which they make to the subjects of their care and guardianship the capabilities of the people themselves rise upon their observation; and that every utterance which has been made about the stimulating and the reopening of the natural sources for the relief of indigence, in proportion to the closing of the artificial source, is the effusion, not of fancy, but of experience. The task may look a little formidable to them at its commencement. But they may be assured of the facility and the pleasure in which it will at length terminate, and that clamor and discontent will subside among the poor, just according as they are less allured from the expedients of nature and Providence for their relief by the glare and the magnitude of city institutions. Along with the humbleness there will also soon be felt the kindliness of a parochial economy after the heartless generalities of the present system have all been broken up and dissipated; and, bating a few outcries of turbulence or menace, which would have been far more frequent and more acrimonious under the old economy than the new, will every Kirk-

Session that enters fearlessly upon the undertaking speedily make its way to the result of a parish better served and better satisfied than ever. . . .

There is not a parish so sunk in helplessness that might not be upheld in public charity on the strength of its own proper and inherent capabilities. And this without harshness; without a tithe of those asperities and heart-burnings among the people which are the sure attendants on a profuse dispensation; without the aspect at all of that repulsive disdain which frowns on the city multitude from the great city institution.

[The author is sanguine that pauperism would melt away in five years or a little more. He has in mind a parish where the Establishment is largely supported by endowments; where there are comparatively few helpless and enfeebled families; and where the people are protected against immigration of dependents.]

There is only one expedient, the use of which, on every principle of equity and fair self-defence, must be conceded to them. They should be protected against the influx of poor from other parishes; and, if there be no law of residence mutually applicable to the various districts of the same city, then it is quite imperative on the Session that is disengaged from the rest not to outstrip in liberality of allowance the practice which obtains under that prior and general management from which it has separated, else there would be an overwhelming importation of paupers from the contiguous places. . . . With this single proviso, let a de-

tached and emancipated Kirk-Session go forth upon its task, and let it spare no labor on the requisite investigations, and let it ply all the right expedients of prevention, the application of which is more for the interest of the claimant than for the interest of the charitable fund; let it examine not merely into his own proper and personal capabilities, but let it urge, and remonstrate, and negotiate with his relatives and friends, and lay down upon himself the lessons of economy and good conduct—in a word, let it knock at the gate of all those natural fountains of supply which we have so often insisted on as being far more kindly and productive than is the artificial fountain of pauperism, which it were well for the population could it be conclusively sealed and shut up altogether; let every attempt, by moral suasion and the influence of a growing acquaintanceship with the families, be made on the better and more effective sources for the relief of want, ere the Session shall open its own door and send forth supplies from its own storehouse on the cases that have been submitted to it; and it will be found, as the result of all this management, prosecuted in the mere style of nature and common-sense, that the people will at once become both more moderate in their demands and, on the whole, more satisfied with the new administration under which they have been placed. We are really not aware how this question can be brought more closely and decisively to the test of experiment than by a body of men thus laying their immediate hand upon it; and, surely, it were only equitable to wait the trial and the failure of such an experiment ere

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CHAPTER XII

ON THE PRESENT STATE AND FUTURE PROSPECTS OF PAUPERISM IN GLASGOW

[In confirmation of his theory Chalmers appeals to the experience of St. John's parish, Glasgow. Considering the number and character of its population, the share of the city funds would have been twelve to fourteen hundred pounds yearly. But the plan here advocated was set in motion; the parish was cut off from city aid; the Sunday-morning collection was made to support the paupers already on the list, mostly aged and rapidly passing away by death. The new cases were assisted out of the collection from the evening congregation, who were generally poor people themselves. Under this system, after a trial of two and one-half years, the meagre sum thus collected was found sufficient for all the current appeals. There was a prospect that the morning fund would soon be available for educational and other enterprises of permanent local value.]

A result so gratifying has certainly exceeded our own anticipations. . . . We have never thought that public charity for the relief of indigence was at all called for by the state and economy of social life, or that the artificial mechanism of a legal and compulsory provision for the poor had ever had any other effect than that of deranging the better mechanism of nature. But we did

the adversaries of pauperism shall be denounced either as unpractised or as unfeeling spectators.

[It may be noted here that recent American experience has seemed to prove that Chalmers was not visionary or unfeeling. Under the most difficult circumstances, with the most concentrated and intense poverty, several great cities have abolished outdoor relief and have found that private charity was able to care for the poor more tenderly and efficiently than public officers. Reference is made to the cities of Brooklyn, New York, and Philadelphia. And in Chicago, gentlemen of high character and long experience in the County Board have declared that the poor would be better off if no aid were given from funds raised by assessment.]

CHAPTER XII

ON THE PRESENT STATE AND FUTURE PROSPECTS OF PAUPERISM IN GLASGOW

[In confirmation of his theory Chalmers appeals to the experience of St. John's parish, Glasgow. Considering the number and character of its population, the share of the city funds would have been twelve to fourteen hundred pounds yearly. But the plan here advocated was set in motion; the parish was cut off from city aid; the Sunday-morning collection was made to support the paupers already on the list, mostly aged and rapidly passing away by death. The new cases were assisted out of the collection from the evening congregation, who were generally poor people themselves. Under this system, after a trial of two and one-half years, the meagre sum thus collected was found sufficient for all the current appeals. There was a prospect that the morning fund would soon be available for educational and other enterprises of permanent local value.]

A result so gratifying has certainly exceeded our own anticipations. . . . We have never thought that public charity for the relief of indigence was at all called for by the state and economy of social life, or that the artificial mechanism of a legal and compulsory provision for the poor had ever had any other effect than that of deranging the better mechanism of nature. But we did

not think that a population would have conformed so speedily to the right system after that the poison and perversion of the wrong system had been so long diffused among them, or that when the great external reservoir was shut, out of which the main stream of pauperism wont to emanate, they would have found such an immediate compensation by their immediate recourse to those fountains of supply which exist within themselves and lie imbosomed among their own families and their own neighborhood. But so it is, and that without any peculiarity of management on our part than a careful and considerate and, we trust, humane examination of every new claim that is preferred upon us. The success of this enterprise, in fact, is not so much the doing of the agency as it is of the people themselves; and it hinges not so much on the number of applications repressed by the one party as on the greatly superior number of applications that are foreborne or withheld by the other party. We do not drive back the people, but the people keep back themselves, and that simply because there is not the glare or magnificence of a great city management to deceive their imaginations and allure them from their natural shifts and resources, and because they are further aware that should they step forward they will be met by men who can give them an intelligent as well as a civil reception, who are thoroughly prepared for appreciating the merits of every application, and at the same time firmly determined to try every right expedient of prevention ere the humiliating descent to pauperism shall be taken by any family within

the limits of their superintendence. The very frankness with which this is announced is liked by the people, and let there be but an easy and a frequent mingling between the managers and the subjects of their administration and there will be no difficulty in establishing a community of sentiment between them, the very tone of hostility toward pauperism that is manifested by the former being positively caught and sympathized with by the latter, who, though of humblest rank in society, can, when rightly treated, display a nobility of heart that makes them the best coadjutors in this undertaking. . . . The truth is that there is not one application for five that there wont to be under the old system. It is unfair to deceive a population, and a population vastly too generous to like one the worse for coming to an open and decisive understanding with them. . . . Every act of friendly intercourse on the part of any observant philanthropist with the lower orders will serve to satisfy him the more how much our distance from the people has kept us in entire delusion regarding them, and led us, more particularly, to underrate both their own sufficiency for their own subsistence and the noble spirit by which they are already actuated or which, under a right system of attentions, can most speedily be infused into them. . . . The efficacy of a near and vigilant and local superintendence, operating independently and within itself, and left to its own means and its own management, does not lie so much in the resistance which it actually puts forth against advances which are actually made, as in the powerful and almost immediate ten-

dency of such an arrangement to beget a general quiescence among the families of that territory over which it operates.

And, to prove that there is naught whatever of peculiar might or mystery in our transactions beyond the reach of most ordinary imitation, it may be right to state the very plain steps and inquiries which take place when any applicants come forward. . . . When one applies for admittance, through his deacon, upon our funds, the first thing to be inquired into is if there be any kind of work that he can yet do, so as to keep him altogether off or as to make a partial allowance serve for his necessities. The second, what his relations and friends are willing to do for them. The third, whether he is a hearer in any dissenting place of worship, and whether its Session will contribute to his relief. And if, after these previous inquiries, it be found that further relief is necessary, then there must be a strict ascertainment of his term of residence in Glasgow, and whether he be yet on the funds of the Town Hospital or is obtaining relief from any other parish.

If, upon all these points being ascertained, the deacon of the proportion where he resides still conceives him an object for our assistance, he will inquire whether a small temporary aid will meet the occasion, and states this to the first ordinary meeting. But if, instead of this, he conceives him a fit subject for a regular allowance, he will receive the assistance of another deacon to complete and confirm his inquiries by the next ordinary meeting thereafter; at which time the applicant, if they

still think him a fit object, is brought before us and received upon the fund at such a rate of allowance as, upon all the circumstances of the case, the meeting of deacons shall judge proper. Of course, pending these examinations, the deacon is empowered to grant the same sort of discretionary aid that is customary in the other parishes.

[This was done solely from the evening collections from poor people—£80 ($400) a year. In reply to the objection that this system would require an amount of time and labor which unofficial persons without salary would be unwilling or unable to offer, he says:]

The task may look insuperable in the gross, but its obstacles will vanish in the detail. When the territory is once split into its several portions and assigned to the several agents, each of them is sure to find that the whole time and trouble of the requisite inquiries fall marvellously short of his first anticipations. We deny not that upon each particular application more of care may be expended than under the lax and complicated administration of other days; but this is amply compensated by a great and immediate reduction in the number of these applications, so, in fact, as almost to reduce into a sinecure that office which, when regarded from a distance, had been magnified into one of mighty and almost insurmountable labor. We are the more solicitous to do away this objection, for we, too, should decry every plan to the uttermost, as bearing upon it the character of Utopianism, that could not be accom-

plished by every-day instruments, operating on every-day materials. . . .

[In reply to the insinuation that St. John's parish had reduced its burden by driving out paupers by its rigid investigation to become a burden to neighboring parishes, he replies:]

The truth is that on the first year of the reformed pauperism in St. John's the importation of paupers from the city into that parish just doubled the exportation of paupers from the parish into the city, and ever since the balance has been greatly to our disadvantage.

But the thought will recur again that the people cannot be served under such an arrangement, and therefore cannot be satisfied; that suffering and starvation must be the necessary accompaniments of an abridged pauperism; that one must bring a cold heart, as well as a cold understanding, to this sort of administration; that a certain unrelenting hardness of temperament on the part of those who preside over it is altogether indispensable to its success; and that, when the success is at length obtained, it must be at the expense of pained and aggrieved and neglected humanity.

Coldness and cruelty and hardihood are the inseparable associates of legal charity, and it is under the weight of its oppressive influence that all the opposite characteristics of our nature, its tenderness and gentleness and compassion, have been so grievously overborne. These, however, are ready to burst forth again in all their old and native efflorescence on the moment that this heavy

incumbrance is cleared away from the soil of humanity. It is indeed strange that the advocates of pauperism should have so reproached its enemies for all those stern qualities of the heart wherewith it is the direct tendency of their own system to steel the bosoms of its hard and hackneyed administrators; or, because the latter have affirmed that the cause of indigence may safely be confided to those spontaneous sympathies which nature has implanted and which Christianity fosters in the bosom of man, they should therefore have been charged by the former with a conspiracy to damp and to disparage these sympathies—with an attempt to eradicate those very principles on which they repose so much of their dependence, and to the power of which and the importance of which they have rendered the award of a most high and honorable testimony.

The difference between the administration of a great public revenue for indigence and the administration of a small one seems to be this: The dispensers of the former are not naturally or necessarily led to bethink themselves of any other way by which a case of poverty can be disposed of than simply by the application of the means wherewith they are intrusted. And as these means, under a system of assessment, admit of being augmented indefinitely, they are apt to conceive that there is an adequacy in them to all the demands of all the want that can be ascertained. At any rate they seldom reckon on any other way of providing for human need than by the positive discharge of legal aliment thereupon. So that their only, or, at least, their chief,

business in the intercourse they have with the applicants, is simply to rectify or to dismiss their claim, on the investigation they have made into their palpable resources, upon the one hand, compared with their palpable exigencies, upon the other. In the whole of this process there is much of the coldness and formality of a court of law, and the very magnitude of the concern, along with the unavoidable distance at which the members of such an elevated board stand from those who venture to approach it, serves to infuse still more of this character into all the large and general managements of pauperism. All is precise, and rigorous and stately, or, if any human feeling be admitted, it is not the warmth of kindness, but the heat of irritation. The repeated experience of imposition, and the consciousness of inability thoroughly to protect themselves from the recurrence of it, and the sensation of a growing pressure, against which no other counteractive is known, or even put into operation, than that of a stern or a suspicious treatment, which only calls forth a more resolute assertion on the part of the aggressors upon public charity,—these are what have instilled a certain acerbity into all its ministrations. So that with the thousands that are scattered over that multitude which the great city institution hath drawn around it, there is not one softening moral influence which is thereby carried abroad among them, no exhibition of tenderness upon the one hand, and no gratitude, that can only be awakened by the perception of such tenderness, upon the other; no heart-felt obligation among those whose plea hath been sustained; while among those who are non-suited may

be heard the curses of disappointment, the half-suppressed murmurs of deep and sullen indignation. . . .

The scantiness of the means, it may be alleged, will necessarily reduce the elder or the deacon to his shifts, in the management of his district. And so it does. But they are the very shifts by which the business of human charity is transferred to its right principles, and, after this is accomplished, there is both more of genuine satisfaction among the poor, and more of genuine sympathy among all those whose duty it is to succor or to uphold them. . . . It is true that under this influence the expenses of public charity may lessen every year, yet so far from this being any indication of extinct tenderness or frozen sensibilities, it may serve most authentically to mark the growth of all those better habits, and of all those neighborly regards which ensure to every parochial family the greatest comfort and the greatest contentment that in the present state of humanity are attainable.

[Most of the parishes of Glasgow were moving in the direction which Chalmers advised at that time. He urged them to break away entirely from the compulsory system and to leave the care of all the poor to each parish. He cites one of the suburban parishes of Glasgow, the Barony, with a population of fifty thousand souls, where the assessment system had been introduced in 1810. In seven years the poor-rate increased fivefold. On the face of it this fact seemed to indicate the tendency of the compulsory system to increase the public burden indefinitely, and without increasing the security and comfort of the poor.]

CHAPTER XIII

ON THE DIFFICULTIES AND EVILS WHICH ADHERE EVEN TO THE BEST CONDITION OF SCOTTISH PAUPERISM.

[ANOTHER type of parish is that of the Gorbals, a suburb of Glasgow, with a population of about twenty-two thousand persons. The people were working-folk who had little wealth and no unusual sources of revenue. This parish had never admitted an assessment, and the annual expense for the poor was not over £400. The author thinks it a fair inference that if such a poor parish could get on without compulsory relief others might do as well; that a tax is unnecessary. In 1817 this parish, in a year of unusual hardship, when a fund of £10,000 was raised for relief, received only about one-seventh of that received by Glasgow, where the tax system was maintained. Part of the better administration was due to the fact that the elders of Gorbals were resident among the people and knew them personally. Dr. Chalmers regards this as a sign that the voluntary system does not impose special hardship on the almoners of relief. If the elders were really in antagonism with the people they would seek to dwell at a distance, " and we should behold the elders of this parish, each skulking in distance and concealment from the clamor of unappeased families, and the remonstrance and outcry of their sympathizing neighborhood. Instead of which, they place themselves fearlessly down in the very midst of all these possibilities, and

on their slender means do they brave an encounter with all the real or imagined poverty that is around them."]

The thing that has been found in consequence is that the way of bringing pauperism down to its right dimensions is to face and not to flee from it; that, instead of starving it by unmanfully running away the better method of reducing it is by proximity and thorough investigation, to probe it to the uttermost; that the nearer you come to it, it dwindles the more into insignificance before you. . . .

[Even under the best conditions the system of public relief tends to excite the greed of dependents and to dull the charity of the rich by devolving a personal duty upon a public officer.]

It is cruel first to raise a hope and then to disappoint it, and there are two expedients by which this cruelty might be done away. The first and most obvious expedient were to meet the hope by a liberality more adequate to the high pitch at which it is entertained. This has been attempted in England, and we venture to affirm, as the consequence of it, a tenfold amount of unappeased rapacity and of rancorous dissatisfaction and of all that distress which arises where the expectation has greatly overshot the fulfilment. The second expedient were utterly to extinguish the hope, by the total abolition of public charity for the relief of indigence. This has not been attempted in Scotland; and there are reasons, both of a prudential and of an absolute character why we should deem the attempt to be not ad-

visable. But, meanwhile, if the sessional charity of Scotland is to be kept up, it is but honesty to proclaim its utter insignificance in the hearing of all the people. They should be taught that in trusting in it they only trust to a lying mockery. The way to neutralize the mischief of our parochial dispensations is by a frank and open exposure of their utter worthlessness; for we know not how a more grievous injury can be done to the poor than by holding out such a semblance of aid to them as might either reduce, by ever so little, their own economy, or deaden, by ever so little, the sympathy of their fellows. A full feeling of responsibility to the demands of human want and human suffering should be kept alive among the families of every neighborhood; and for this purpose it ought to be a matter of broad understanding and notoriety, that there is positively nothing done by any of our Kirk-Sessions which should supersede the care of individuals for themselves or their keepership one for another. The elder who effectually teaches this lesson in his district, does more for the substantial relief of its needy than by any multiplication whatever of public allowances; and even without one farthing to bestow may thus be the instrument of a great alleviation to the ills and hardships of poverty. It is a downright fraud upon our population to keep up the forms of a great public distribution without letting them know that the fruits of it are so rare and scanty as to be wholly undeserving of all notice or regard from them. . . .

In the great majority of our Scottish parishes all which the administrators of the public charity profess to do is to

"give in aid." They do not hold themselves responsible for the entire subsistence of any of their paupers; they presume in the general, on other resources, without inquiring specifically either into the nature or the amount of them. It says much for the truth of our whole speculation that in this presumption they are almost never disappointed; and that whether in the kindness of relatives, or the sympathy of neighbors, or the many undefinable shifts and capabilities of the pauper himself, there do cast up to him the items of a maintenance. . . .

Let us advert to a few of those leading principles on which we hold it a practicable thing to perfect the administration of our Scottish pauperism.

And, first, we think that a great moral good would ensue and without violence done to humanity, were the Kirk-Session to put a negative on all those demands that have their direct and visible origin in profligacy of character. We allude more particularly to the cases of illegitimate children and of runaway parents. It should ever rank among those decent proprieties of an ecclesiastical court which can on no account be infringed, that it shall do nothing which might extend a countenance or give a security to wickedness. In the case of exposed infants a necessity may be laid upon it. But sure we are that generally, and without outrage to any of our sympathies, the criminal parties may be safely left to the whole weight of a visitation that is at once the consequence and the corrective of their own transgression. We know not a more pitiable condition than that of a female who is at once degraded and deserted; but many are the reasons why it

should be altogether devolved on the secret and unobserved pity which it is so well-fitted to inspire. And we know not a more striking exhibition of the power of those sympathies, that we have so often quoted as being adequate, in themselves, to all the emergencies of human suffering, than the unfailing aid, and service, and supply, wherewith even the childbed of guilt is sure to be surrounded. It is a better state of things when, instead of the loud and impudent demand that is sometimes lifted upon such occasions, the sufferer is left to a dependence upon her own kinsfolk, and neighbors, and to the strong moral corrective that lies in their very kindness to her. We think that if every instance of a necessity which has thus been created were understood to lie without the pale of the sessional administration, and to be solely a draft on the liberalities of the benevolent, we both think that these liberalities would guarantee a subsistence to all who are concerned, and that, at the same time, in a more intense popular odium, there would arise a defensive barrier against that licentiousness which the institutions of our sister country have done so much to foster and to patronize. It must shed a grievous blight over the delicacies of a land when the shameless prostitute is vested with a right, because of the very misdeeds which ought to have humbled and abashed her, when she can plead her own disgrace as the argument for being listened to, and, on the strength of it, compel the jurisdictions of the country to do homage to her claim, when crime is thus made the passport to legal privileges, and the native unloveliness of vice is somewhat glossed and overborne by the public

recognition which has thus so unwisely been extended to it.

In the case of a family that has been abandoned by its regardless and unnatural father, and where there is no suspected collusion between the parents, there is pity mingled with reproach to the helpless sufferers. And our whole experience assures us that this pity would be available to a far larger and more important aid than is rendered, on such occasions, by any of the public charities in Scotland.

[He thinks that no one would be left to suffer, and parents would be much less likely to desert their offspring, if they knew that their own neighbors must directly bear the burden. Family obligations would not be dissolved under the voluntary plan as they are under the general system. Instead of being a harsh and unfeeling suggestion it is thought to be most merciful, since it tends to reduce cruelty and desertion and immorality to the lowest point.]

But, secondly, if that indigence which is the effect of crime might be confined to the charities of private life, we may be very sure that the indigence which is not associated with crime will be largely and liberally met by these charities. . . . One of our chief arguments for re-committing the business of alms to a natural economy is, that the wealthy and the poor would thereby come more frequently into contact, and that would be made to issue upon the destitute from the play of human feelings, which is now extorted without good-will on the one side, or gratitude on the other, by the authority of human law. It

were an incalculable good if, in this way, the breath of a milder and happier spirit could be infused into society. . . .

But, thirdly, there is a class of necessities in the relief of which public charity is not at all deleterious, and which she might be safely left to single out and support, both as liberally and ostensibly as she may. We allude to all those varieties, whether of mental or of bodily disease, for which it is a wise and salutary thing to rear a public institution. We hold it neither wise nor salutary to have any such asylum for the impotency which springeth from age; for this is not an unforeseen exigency, but one that, in the vast majority of instances, could have been provided for, by the care of the individual. And neither is it an exigency that is destitute of all resource in the claims and obligations of nature, for what is more express, or more clearly imperative than the duty of children? A systematic provision for age in any land is tantamount to a systematic hostility against its virtues, both of prudence and of natural piety. But there are other infirmities and other visitations, to which our nature is liable, and a provision for which stands clearly apart from all that is exceptionable. We refer not to those current household diseases which are incidental, on the average, to every family, but to those more special inflictions of distress by which in one or more of its members, a family is sometimes set apart and signalized. A child who is blind, or speechless, or sunk in helpless idiotism, puts into this condition the family to which it belongs. No mischief whatever can accrue from every such case being

fully met and provided for, and it were the best vindication of a Kirk-Session, for the spareness of its allowances, on all those occasions where the idle might work, or kinsfolk might interpose, that it gives succor to the uttermost of its means in all those fatalities of nature which no prudence could avert, and which being not chargeable as a fault, ought neither to be chargeable as an expense on any poor and struggling family.

It may be seen at once wherein lies the distinction between the necessities of signal and irremediable disease and those merely of general indigence. A provision, however conspicuous, for the former, will not add one instance of distress more to the already existing catalogue. A provision for the latter, if regular and proclaimed, will furthermore be counted on, and so be sure to multiply its own objects, to create, in fact, more of general want than it supplies. To qualify for the first kind of relief, one must be blind, or deaf, or lunatic, or maimed, which no man is wilfully, so that this walk of charity can be overtaken, and without any corrupt influence on those who are sustained by it. To qualify for the second kind of relief one has only to be poor, which many become wilfully, and always, too, in numbers which exceed the promise and the power of public charity to uphold them; so that this walk cannot only never be overtaken, but, by every step of advancement upon it, it stretches forth to a more hopeless distance than before, and is also more crowded with the thriftless, and the beggarly and the immoral. The former cases are put into our hand by nature, in a certain definite amount, and she has further established

in the human constitution such a recoil from pain, or from the extinction of any of the senses, as to form a sure guarantee against the multiplication of them. The latter cases are put into our hands by man, and his native love of indolence or dissipation becomes a spontaneous and most productive fountain of poverty, in every land where public charity has interposed to disarm it of its terrors. It is thus that while pauperism has most egregiously failed to provide an asylum in which to harbor all the indigence of a country, there is no such an impossibility in the attempt to harbor derangement, or special impotency and disease. The one enterprise must ever fall short of its design, and, at the same time, carry a moral deterioration in its train. The other may fulfil its design to the uttermost, and without the alloy of a single evil that either patriot or economist can fear.

The doings of our Saviour in the world, after he entered on his career as a minister, had in them much of the *éclat* of public charity. Had he put his miraculous power of feeding into full operation, it would have thrown the people loose from all regular habits, and spread riot and disorder over the face of the land. But there was no such drawback to his miraculous power of healing. And we think it both marks the profoundness of his wisdom, and might serve to guide the institutions and the schemes of philanthropy, that while we read of but two occasions on which he multiplied loaves for a people who had been overtaken with hunger, and one on which he refused the miracle to a people who crowded about him for the purpose of being fed, he laid no limitation whatever on his

supernatural faculties, when they followed him for the purpose of being cured. But it is recorded of him again and again, that when the halt and the withered and the blind and the impotent, and those afflicted with divers diseases were brought unto him, he looked to them, and he had compassion on them, and he healed them all.

This, then, is one safe and salutary absorbent for the revenue of a Kirk-Session. The dumb and the blind and the insane of a parish may be freely alimented therewith, to the great relief of those few families who have thus been specially afflicted. Such a destination of the fund could excite no beggarly spirit in other families, which, wanting the peculiar claim, would feel that they had no part or interest in the peculiar compassion. There is vast comfort in every walk of philanthropy, where a distinct and definite good is to be accomplished, and whereof, at a certain given expense, we are sure to reach the consummation. . . . There would be no harm in stimulating the liberality of a congregation for the support of a parish surgeon, who might be at the free command of the families. There would be no harm in thus supporting a dispensary for good medicines, or in purchasing an indefinite right of admittance to a hospital for disease. . . .

The parochial charity of our land need not be extirpated. It is in the power of a wise and wholesome administration to impress upon it a high moral subserviency; to turn it, for example, to the endowment of schools, or the establishment of parish libraries, or the rearing of chapels for an unprovided population, who, by

one and the same process, could have their moral wants supplied, and be weaned from all that sordid dependence of charity by which their physical wants have not been abridged, but rather aggravated, both in their frequency and their soreness.

CHAPTER XIV

ON THE LIKELIEST MEANS FOR THE ABOLITION OF PAUPERISM IN ENGLAND

[After referring to Chapter X for the argument against "pauperism," the author proceeds with the assertion that the evils of the English administration are universally acknowledged and need no expanded illustration. The law of pauperism in England had dried up the streams of personal charity, had degraded the poor, and had burdened the land with a tax which threatened the national prosperity. To remove this state of things nothing more was necessary than, by gradual and prudent stages, to throw back the indigent on their own exertions and on the natural kindness of their neighbors.]

It is just as if some diseased excrescence had gathered upon the human frame, that stood connected with the use of some palatable but pernicious liquor, to which the patient was addicted. All that the physician has to do in this case is to interdict the liquor, when, without further care or guardianship on his part, the excrescence will subside, and from the *vis medicatrix* alone, that is inherent in the patient's constitution, will health be restored to him. . . . There might an unnecessary shock be given by too sudden a change of regimen. There might be an inconvenient rapidity of transition, which had as well be

avoided, by wise and wary management. This consideration affects the question of policy as to the most advisable mode of carrying the cure into effect. But it does not affect the question of principle, either as to the cause of the disease, or as to the certainty of a good and wholesome result when that cause is done away. . . .

And surely it cannot be questioned that all those principles of our nature which, taken together, make out the *vis medicatrix*, are just as firmly seated, and would in fit and favorable circumstances be of as unfailing operation in England as in any other country on the face of the earth. . . . For, first, what malignant charm can there be in the air or in the geography of England which should lead us to conceive of its people, that they are exempt from that most urgent principle of our nature—the law of self-preservation? . . . In spite of their pauperism, and of its efficacy to lull them into a careless improvidence, do we find that the prudential virtues, even of the lower orders, are enfeebled only, and not destroyed. The Saving Banks, and Benefit Societies, which are to be met with in almost every district of the kingdom, are strong ostensible indications of a right and reflecting selfishness, which, if only kept on the alert, and unseduced from its own objects, by the promise and the allurement of public charity, would do more for the comfort of our peasantry than all the offerings of parochial and private benevolence put together. There is nought that would more revive or re-invigorate the impulse to accumulation than the abolition of the law of pauperism. Saving Banks would be multiplied; and this, though the most palpable,

would not be the only fruit of that sure and speedy resurrection that should then take place of an economic habit among the people.

[In a note the author illustrates the evil effects of outdoor relief on the habit of thrift among laborers. He observes that the deposits in "Saving Banks" are largely made by domestic servants and by persons in easy circumstances, and that common laborers neglect these institutions. "The operation of public charity in lessening the deposits must be quite obvious. The following anecdote illustrates this. To prove it is not necessary. A poor woman at Clapham, near London, whose daughter had begun to put into the 'Saving Bank,' said to her, 'Why, how foolish you are. It is all a contrivance of the rich to save their own pockets. You had much better enjoy your own money, and when you want they will take care of you.' The daughter did withdraw from the Saving Bank."]

But, secondly, the law of relative affection, in a natural state of things, we should imagine to be of just as powerful operation in England as in any other country of the world. . . . The advertisements which daily meet our eye of runaway husbands, or abandoned children, and those cases of aged parents who have been consigned, by their own offspring, to the cheerless atmosphere of a poor's house, mark not the genuine developments of nature in England, but those cruel deviations from it to which its mistaken policy has given rise. . . . The spectacle of venerable grandsires at the fireside of cottage families will become as frequent and familiar in this as in other lands. And a man's own children will be to him

the best pledges that the evening of his days shall be spent under a roof of kindlier protection than any prison-house of charity can afford. Let pauperism be done away, and it will be nobly followed up by a resurrection of the domestic virtues. The national crime will disappear with the national temptation; and England, when delivered therefrom, will prove herself to be as tender and true to nature as any other member of the great human family. . . .

And, thirdly, who can doubt from the known generosity of the English character, that nought but scope and opportunity are wanting in order to evince both the force and the fruitfulness of that sympathy which neighbors in humble life have for each other. . . . Like the law of relative affection, it is not capable of being verified from the records or the registers of a general and combined philanthropy, and can only be witnessed to its full extent by those who are thoroughly conversant with the habits of the poor, and have had much of close and frequent observation among the intimacies of plebeian fellowship. There is not one topic on which the higher orders of England have so crude and unfurnished an apprehension, as on the power and alertness of mutual sympathy among the working classes. This, in some measure, arises from its being in part stifled throughout the whole of their land, because in part superseded by their public and parochial institutions. But still it may be abundantly recognized. . . .

But this disposition of the lower orders to befriend each other were of little avail, in this question, without the

power. . . . On this point, too, there is a world of incredulity to be met with; and it is difficult to find acceptance for that arithmetic which demonstrates the might and the efficacy of those humble offerings which so amply compensate by their number for the smallness of each individually. The penny associations which have been instituted for objects of Christian beneficence, afford us a lesson as to the power and productiveness of littles. Even the sums deposited with Saving Banks and Benefit Societies point to the same conclusion. But perhaps the most impressive, though melancholy, proof that can be given of a capability in humble life, greatly beyond all that is commonly imagined, may be gathered from the vast sums which are annually expended in those houses of public entertainment that are so frequented by people of the laboring classes in society. . . .

The fourth and last counteractive against the evils that might be apprehended to ensue on the abolition of pauperism, is the freer and larger sympathy which would then be exercised by the rich in behalf of the poor. This we have placed last in the order of enumeration, because we deem it least in the order of importance. . . . There are subscriptions and philanthropic societies innumerable. There is not a parish of any great note or population in England without them, and they prove how surely we may count on a kind and copious descent of liberality over all those places from which the dispensations of pauperism shall be withdrawn.

[England had not been released from the necessity of raising large sums by voluntary gifts because it had a

compulsory poor-rate. The very fact that the rich are compelled to aid the indigent tends to diminish the motives which lead to generosity.]

That act of Elizabeth, which has been extolled as a monument of English feeling and English wisdom, is a monument of the legislature's fears, that neither feeling nor wisdom were to be found in the land. It is, in fact, the cruelest reproach which the government of a country ever laid upon its subjects. It is an enactment founded on a distrust of the national character, or an attempt to supplement by law an apprehended deficiency in the personal and the domestic and the social virtues of Englishmen. And never did an assembly of rulers make a more unfortunate aberration across the rightful boundaries of the province which belongs to them. Never did legislation more hurtfully usurp the prerogatives of nature than when she stretched forth her hand to raise a prop, by which she has pierced the side of charity, and did that with an intent to foster, which has served only to destroy.

[Allusion is made to various English efforts to reduce the overwhelming burden of pauperism by a more rigid administration, by strict investigation, refusal to aid those who refused to seek or accept work, or whose relatives were able to provide for them. But these attempts are of comparatively slight consequence so long as the system of compulsory legal relief remains. Its vices are deep and belong to its essence.]

And there is reason to fear that even in those parishes where a select vestry has been most successful, there may be a speedy recurrence to the same lax and careless style

of administration as before. . . . Even the very relief that has been achieved, might lead to a satisfaction and a repose, that would soon call back as great a host of applicants as ever, for it is the very nature of pauperism, that, at all times, there is the pressure of a tendency from without, which will instantly force admittance so soon as there is the slightest relaxation from that vigilance wherewith its approaches have been guarded.

The marvels which have of late been effected by a strict administration have suspended, in some places, the desire that was at one time felt for a radical change of system in the public charity of England. But we do not think that this can last long, and have no doubt that after various expedients have been tried and found wanting, the final result will be a stronger experimental conviction than ever of something wrong in the principle as well as in the practice of the poor laws. There is, we believe, a possible rigor in the execution of them, by which, if put into operation, two-thirds of all the paupers now in the country might be thrown back upon their own resources, and yet be landed in a state of as great comfort and sufficiency as, with their present allowances, they at present enjoy. . . . But, then, this requisite degree of rigor will, in the first place, not be adopted in most parishes; and, secondly, in those parishes where under a strong temporary impulse it has been resorted to, and with great immediate success, it will not be persevered in. The very success will lull the administration into its old apathy. The pitch and the tension to which it has been wound up will relax again. . . .

But even though the force of resistance from within was kept up in the utmost possible intensity, yet we cannot imagine a state of things more injurious to the virtue and peace of the commonwealth. Even though the discipline of the workhouse should at length be perfectly assimilated to the discipline of a gaol, we fear that like many others of the legal scarecrows which have been devised, its only reaction would be in working down the taste and character of the people to its own standard. In proportion as the law multiplied its severities, would pauperism acquire a stouter stomach for the digestion of them, and those regulations which at first might deter, will, at length, be got over, because of a now fiercer and hardier and more resolute population. We have, at all times, exceedingly doubted the policy of those expedients which are meant to operate *in terrorem*, and have ever thought of them as most fearfully hazardous experiments on the principle and feeling of the lower orders. They may repel some of those who are of a better and finer temperament than their neighbors; but, in by far the greater number of instances, will they blunt the delicacies which are thus handled too rudely; and the very instrument which they thought to lay hold of for driving applicants away, will vanish before their grasp. . . .

The badges, and the publication of names, and the posting of them in conspicuous places, may all work a recoil from pauperism for a time, but only to come back with accumulated force, and with a more sturdy and unmanageable character than before. . . . The practical effect of the whole has been to form two distinct classes

or characters of population, which stand more widely and remotely contrasted in England than they do, we believe, in any other country of Europe. The one is a pure, and a noble, and a high-minded class, who, of course, would be revolted by the severities of pauperism. The other yield to her temptations, and, by weathering the brunt of her severities, their meanness and corruption have only been rendered more inveterate. The spirit of education and of moral enterprise that is now abroad in England must extend the one class. But while the law of pauperism continues, the other class too must increase and multiply. They are the in-field gypsies of the land; and they transmit their habit to their descendants; and this is the reason that pauperism is so apt to fix, as if by hereditary settlement, in families. There is thus a mass of corruption that never will be got rid of but with the extinction of this boasted charity by law. Until a blow be given to the root of the mischief, it will be found, in the long run, that there is a noxiousness in its antidotes, as well as in its bane. Its severities, in fact, are alike hurtful with its temptations. It is not by playing one against another that any substantial or abiding reformation will be gained. There must be a way devised by which to cancel both.

Believing then, as we do, that no general or abiding good will ever be effectuated by a stricter administration of the law of pauperism, we feel our decided preference to be for the gradual abolition of it. . . . The question now resolves itself into two parts. There is first the parliamentary treatment of it, and then the parochial treatment of it, after that the legislature has done its office.

. . . The splendid visionary is precipitated from his aerial flight, because he overlooked the utter pathlessness of that space which lay between him and the impossibility that he aspired after. . . . The fixed and obstinate practitioner refuses to move one single footstep, because he equally overlooks that continuous way which leads through the intervening distance to some great, yet practicable achievement. But give him time, and the mere length of a journey ought not to repel the traveller from his undertaking, nor will he resign the advantage for which he looks at its further extremity, till you have demonstrated that one or more of its stages is utterly impassable. In other words, there is a blind infidelity, as well as a blinded imagination, and it is difficult to say whether the cause of philanthropy has suffered more from the temerity of projectors, or from the phlegmatic inertness of men, who, unable to discriminate between the experimental and the visionary, are alike determined to despise all and to resist all.

CHAPTER XV

ON THE LIKELIEST PARLIAMENTARY MEANS FOR THE ABOLITION OF PAUPERISM IN ENGLAND

A GENTLEMAN who is now bestowing much of his attention on the poor laws, when informed of the speed and facility wherewith all its compulsory pauperism had been extinguished in a certain parish, replied, that it might be easy to effect the deliverance of one parish, but that it was not so easy to legislate for the deliverance of all England. But if an easy and applicable method can be devised for the parish, what is it that the legislature has to do? Simply to remove the legal obstructions that may now stand in the way of the method in question. Simply to authorize each parish that so wills to avail itself thereof. And should many, or should all of them at length go forth upon the enterprise, and succeed in it, then the extinction of this sore evil over the country at large, instead of being immediately referable to the impetus of that one blow, which has been struck against it by the lifting up of the arm of parliament, should be referred to a cause that is far more commensurate with the vastness of the achievement, even to the power of those multiplied energies that have been set at work throughout the land, each of which, however, has only its own separate and

limited object to overtake, and each of which acteth independently of all the rest.

However obvious this may be, yet we have often thought that the overlooking of it is one main cause of that despair and helplessness which are felt by many of our legislators on the subject of this great national distemper. . . . He who has a place and an authority in the councils of the empire, takes a wide and extended survey over the whole of it, and by a sort of fancied ubiquity he brings himself into contact with all the struggles and difficulties of all the parishes, and he sometimes feels as if the weight and the labor of what is indeed a very operose concern were wholly accumulated upon his own person, and, instead of regarding pauperism as that which can only be put to death by inches, and with the help of many separate hands, he sees it as standing forth in single combat, a hydra of dread and direful encounter, at the sight of whom every heart fails, and every arm is paralyzed.

And akin to this delusion is the imagination on the part, we believe, of many, that the only way of proceeding against pauperism is by imperative enactments, which behoved to be instantly and simultaneously followed up by a change of administration all over the country. . . . And so it is that an attempt on the poor laws is dreaded by many as the sure precursor of a revolution; nor is it seen what the possible way is by which this question can be prosecuted with the same wisdom, and withal in the same calmness, and with the same happy results, as have often been experienced in the treatment of other questions, and

that through a long era of peaceful and progressive improvement in the domestic policy of England.

We should hold it to be highly advisable, that any enactment which might be made on the subject of pauperism shall not be one that brings a certain force upon all of the parishes, but simply one that allows a certain freedom to any of the parishes; not one that puts forth a law, but one that holds out a leave; and a leave, too, only to be granted on such a free and extended concurrence of householders in the application for it, as to be itself a guarantee, that however odious a general movement against pauperism may be over the country at large, yet that each particular movement is, within the limits of its own separate parish, abundantly popular.

[An illustration is given from the permissive legislation, by which the commons of England were gradually enclosed for more perfect culture. But it should be noted that in Scotland, according to Lamond, under such a permissive system, the parishes gradually introduced outdoor relief,—"pauperism," as our author calls it.]

There are three distinct objects that should be comprehended in the provisions of the general act. . . . The first relates to the act of concurrence that should be required of any parish ere that parish shall be empowered to make a radical change in its management of the poor. The second relates to the nature of the change. And the third, to the way in which the Parliament and the people of England are to be satisfied, both at the outset, and through all the subsequent stages of this retracing move-

ment, that its effects are so beneficial, and more particularly to the poor themselves, as to be altogether worthy of a humane and civilized nation.

To grant allowance for the enclosure of a parish common, Parliament expects the consent of four-fifths of the proprietors, in number and value. To grant leave for the new-modelling of its pauperism, we should not object to the consent of a larger proportion than this of all the parish householders, who are not paupers themselves, being required by Parliament.

[Reference is made to several acts which permitted local changes on a similar principle.]

It is obvious that the larger the consent is that shall be required by the general act, the fewer will be the parishes who can avail themselves of its provisions. . . . It were well that this act was loaded on purpose with a condition that is not easily satisfied; and thus trials will be restricted, in the first instance, to a few of the easiest and likeliest of the parishes. We do not want the whole of England to be thrown adrift, at the bidding of a yet untried hypothesis. But we want England to put herself to school. We think that she needs to go to school, and when looking attentively at those trial parishes she is, in fact, learning the first lessons, and acquiring the sound rudiments of a sound education. . . .

There are many distinct advantages in a very large concurrence of householders being required at the outset. . . .

First, it confines the operation of the proposed act to

those parishes where the experiment is most popular, and so removes it altogether from those regions where its very obnoxiousness to the community at large would be a serious impediment in the way of its success. . . .

But, secondly, a large concurrence in favor of the new method is our best guarantee for a resolute and powerful agency to carry on the execution of it. We should not despair of a most efficient vestry in any parish for conducting aright the business of its gratuitous charity where there had been a nearly unanimous consent to the abolition of its legal charity. There is no fear of any parish which has thus singled out, and made a spectacle of itself, that it will not acquit itself well, and at length demonstrate to all its neighbors that without a poor-rate, and without any painful sacrifice at all, it can boast a happier and better population than any of those who are around it. . . .

And, thirdly, . . . this does not eventually exclude the great body and majority of England from the proposed reformation. It only prepares the way for it. The truth is, that should so few as twenty parishes come forward, under the first general act, and should their experiment prosper, it will do more to assure the hearts and the hopes of the people of England than a thousand dissertations. . . .

It is thus by a series of general acts, as by a series of stepping-stones, England may emerge out of all the difficulties of her present pauperism. The very first footstep that she takes is on a firm basis, and all along she moves by a way that is strictly experimental. Through-

out every inch of her wary progress she never needs to abandon the light of observation; and on the whole of this interesting walk over her provinces, and, at length, till she reaches her own mighty metropolis in triumph, is she guided from one achievement to another, and by the way she best loves, because the way that is most eminently congenial with the sober and practical character of her undertaking.

In regard to the nature of the change, we should leave untouched the condition and the rights of all who, at the time of its being entered upon, are permanent paupers. There should be no dismissal of any who would not have been dismissed under the old regimen. It is, of course, quite fair to scrutinize their means and resources to the uttermost, and on any discovery of their being adequate to their own support, or on any actual improvement that may have taken place in their circumstances, by which they are enabled to provide for themselves, it is perfectly right that their names should be expunged from the roll. . . . The change of treatment, whatever it may be, should apply exclusively to those who apply for parochial relief, either for the first time, or apply for it anew, after they have been made to do without it for a period. . . .

The first change that we should propose in the parochial system, for the management of the poor, is that in reference to every new applicant the special power of justices to order relief should be altogether taken away. The parish vestry would, in this case, be the ultimate and the only place of application, and their decision,

both as to relief and as to the amount of it, should be final. . . .

The second change that we should propose relates to the fund out of which the new applicants shall be met. . . . Now we hold it essential to a sound and abiding reformation of pauperism . . . that the power which the church-wardens and overseers have of making a rate, either with or without the concurrence of the inhabitants, for the purpose of meeting any fresh applications, shall henceforth cease, and that, if any fund be judged necessary in order to provide for new cases, it shall, under a public and parochial administration, be altogether a gratuitous, and in no shape a legal or compulsory, one. For the purpose of constituting such a fund, the minister and church-wardens may be empowered to have a weekly collection at the church-doors, or what is now gathered in the shape of sacrament money may be made over to it, or donations may be received from individuals in all which ways the revenue of a Kirk-Session in Scotland is mainly upheld. . . .

The third change that would be required should be in the constitution of the vestry.

[The recommendation is that the vestry be enlarged to include the minister, church-wardens, and even large contributors. . . .]

But what is this rational principle? Have we a right to fancy it, and go abroad with the phantasy over the land? Is it not possible that after all it may be a wrong onset that we make? and how are we to know that

under the operation of this boasted panacea we might not add to the number and sorely aggravate the wretchedness of our suffering families?

Now to meet these questions, we affirm of the process that it is strictly a tentative one. It is not the dictatorial imposition of a method on the part of one who bids an implicit acquiescence therein. It is the confident recommendation of a method, on the part of one who asks that it may be submitted to the touchstone of experience, and who is willing to submit himself to the guidance and the correction of this safe school-master. There is all the difference in the world between rashly presuming on the truth and respectfully feeling our way to it. A very few initial attempts will decide the question and set it at rest. It is a question between the free and gratuitous and the compulsory or legal systems of charity. The latter has been tried all over England and has been found wanting. Let the former be fairly and fully tried in a few parishes of England, and abandoned if they become sensibly worse, and do not become sensibly better. It is our own belief that every year will witness an addition to her trophies and her triumphs. . . . But should her career not be a prosperous one, she will share the fate of her many predecessors—she will vanish, with other expedients, into oblivion, and the Parliament of England can withdraw its sanction when the people of England have ceased from their demand for her. . . .

There ought to be parliamentary commissioners, not for the purpose of receiving appeals on the question of relief, for this would be reviving the present system in an-

other form, but for the purpose of noting and reporting how it is that those parochial communities really do thrive, where the parochial managers have been left to their own unfettered discretion, how it fares with the families, and whether the charity of law be so replaced by sobriety among the poor, and sympathy among the rich, that the charity of nature is more than enough to meet all those apprehended deficiencies which, in the distance, look so big and fearful. If they can report any abuse more flagrant in the trial parishes than now occur on the average throughout the parishes of England; if they can quote instances there of shameful neglect and cruelty which under the present style of administration would not have been realized; if they can speak adversely of the scheme, either because of the particular evils of it which it shall be in their power to specify, or because of that darker aspect of misery which stands visibly out on those parochial families that are under its operation, then let such testimony to the effects of the gratuitous system be its condemnation. But if, instead of this, they can allege, as the fruits of it, an increased contentment, and cheerfulness and good-will, a more manifest kindliness of heart on the part of the higher orders; and this returned by a kindness and gratitude on the part of the lower orders, that had been before unknown, a more frequent intercourse between the various classes of society; and withal, such an impulse on the side of popular education, as to be sensibly raising the mind and the habits of the peasantry; if they can further attest, that never had they been called to witness the spectacle of distress left to suffer for

a season, except in the cases of guilt or of idleness, when it was wise that nature should be left to her own correctives and her own cures; and that even then starvation was a bugbear, which, with all their most diligent search after it they had in no one instance been able to embody; surely, if such shall be their testimony, the voice of Parliament will soon be at one with the voice of the people, and both must unite in stamping their acceptance on a system so fully tried, and so nobly vindicated.

It is not wrong to demand proof for the soundness or efficacy of any expedient, but surely it is wrong to refuse the demand of him who seeks that a proof shall be led. . . . Every experiment lands in experience. An experiment may be just as instructive by its failure as by its success; and if there be parishes in England that are sanguine enough to encounter its difficulties, or willing to brave the hazards of an eventual disgrace, on what possible grounds of reason or expediency should the opportunity be withheld from them? It interferes with nothing. It hinders nothing. Those who desire it not are not disturbed by it; and each corporation, whether of parish or township, is left to the repose of its own settled prejudices, till the light of ocular demonstration may chance to awaken it. . . . Meanwhile all the other devices of reform and regulation might go on as busily as before.

And nothing it appears to us, can be more simple than how to suit the law of settlement to a parish which shall come under the new system. A stranger acquires no right in such a parish, though he should fulfil all those condi-

tions on which a settlement is acquired in other parishes. He may, or he may not, share with the other parishioners in the gratuitous ministrations of the vestry, but neither he nor they should have any right to relief, after that the human care had been devolved on the free sympathies of our nature. It is thus that a trial parish would not import any burden by the influx of strangers from the country at large, and the fair reciprocity therefore is, that the country should not be burdened by any efflux from the parish. As there can be no right acquired by one removing to a trial parish, neither should there be any right acquired by one removing from it. And let us not, therefore, look upon him as an unprivileged outcast from the securities of civilized life. He moves at his own choice, and with his eye open to his circumstances; and he is richer far by trusting to his own resources, and by knowing that he has nothing else to trust to, than he, who, along with the rights, has also the temptations of pauperism. Such a man will find his way, and it, on the whole, will be a way of greater sufficiency and comfort than any which law provides for the nurslings of her artificial charity. The emigrants from a trial parish into any other part of England, will exemplify the general habit of those who have acquired no settlement in the place of their residence, yet choose not to leave it; a habit, it has oft been remarked, of greater industry and virtue than is averaged in the mass of the population.

CHAPTER XVI

ON THE LIKELIEST PAROCHIAL MEANS FOR THE ABOLITION OF PAUPERISM IN ENGLAND

THE first obstacle in the way of entering upon a process for the extirpation of pauperism in any parish is that the difficulty of it will be greatly overrated. The present and the palpable thing is a large annual sum that needs to be levied for the support of the existing generation of paupers, besides the very ponderous establishment that has been raised and which continues to be required for their accommodation. It is quite obvious what an unwieldy concern it would be were the assessment forthwith to cease, and provision to be made on the instant for all those actual poor from whom their accustomed supplies had thus been suddenly withdrawn. There is scarcely a body of parochial managers in England that would not shrink from such an undertaking; and without reflecting for a time on the real difference that there is between this undertaking and the one which we have suggested, they look upon both with the same kind of fearfulness and almost with nearly equal degrees of it. They measure the weight and labor of the new enterprise by the weight of the present pauperism that is now before their eyes; though, in fact, there is not one fraction of it with which the new sys-

tem has necessarily anything to do. . . . It is only with new applicants for relief that the new system has any task to perform, not with the full-grown pauperism of the present generation, but with the embryo pauperism of the next. . . . With the management that is set up to meet and to anticipate the eventual pauperism the business comes on gradually. At first there is none. It does not begin but with the first applicant who offers himself, and he finds you at perfect leisure to attend to him; to take up his case, and most thoroughly to investigate it; to calculate his means and his facilities; to make inquiry after his relatives; to ascertain what work might be provided for him; to arrange, perhaps, some method with a neighbor, as cordially disposed against pauperism as you, for taking him into employment, and making his industry available still to his maintenance; to shift away his application by some temporary aid from the purse of unseen charity; in a word, to ply every expedient for disposing of him better than by admitting him on the roll of your new pauperism, under that new economy which it is now your earnest concern to administer well. After the first has been disposed of, a second comes at a longer or shorter interval, and he finds you still better prepared for him than before; more skilled in the treatment of such applications; more intelligent about the resources of humble life; more able to acquit yourselves prudently and even popularly, by every new act of intercourse with the poor; more rich in experience and knowledge, and, withal, more dexterous in the talent, not of so shifting the request away from you, as that your petitioner shall starve, but of so

shifting it away from you as that he shall be in a better condition than if he had been made a pensioner of yours. . . . Both the facility and the success will very much astonish yourselves; and by the time the pauperism on the poor-rate has all died away, you will find it replaced by a pauperism both so mild in character and so moderate in the amount of it, that out of free-will offerings, and of these alone, all its expenses will be cheerfully borne.

And there is a very important difference between the old and the new administration, the practical operation of which you are not able to appreciate now, but in which you will soon experience that there is really all the might and marvellous efficacy of a charm. What is now demanded as a right will then be preferred as a request. . . . Now the use which you ought to make of this difference is not to bid any one parochial applicant sternly away from you, because now you have the power; but to give courteous entertainment to them all. When a fellow man comes into your presence, and tells you of want or of disease in his family, you are not to "hide yourself from your own flesh." It will always be your part, and more especially at the moment of transition to a system of charity which is yet untried, patiently to listen to every case, and calmly to investigate, and mildly to advise, and to mix up the utmost civility and temper with your wise and firm prosecution of the matter which has been submitted to you. Now it is when so employed that you will come to feel, and that very speedily, too, the breath of another spirit altogether, in your intercourse and dealings with the poor, than that by which they wont to be formerly ani-

mated. At present there is a jealousy between the two classes, upholden by a sense of right upon the one side, and by a dread of rapacity upon the other. But very soon, under the new regimen, will the one party come down from their insolence, and the other party from that distant and defensive attitude which they now think it necessary to maintain. . . .

And it should be adverted to here that agreeably to the scheme which we have ventured to recommend, no parish at the first can embark on this retracing process from legal to gratuitous charity, without a very large concurrence of householders in its favor. . . . There will be more both of power and willingness among the rich. There will be less both of need and of expectancy among the poor. The vestry, in fact, might very easily so manage as at length to find, that even their office, as the administrators of the parochial fund, shall be wellnigh superseded; and that in regard at least to the affairs of parochial indigence, the whole economy of a parish can be well and prosperously conducted, not only without any legal charity but without even the semblance of it, in any public charity at all.

But another fear is, that however sufficient the means may turn out under the proposed system, the management will be so very laborious as to leave no room for hoping that it can long be persevered in. Now this, too, is a bugbear, and, if possible, a still more airy and unsubstantial one than the former. The only strenuous management that is at all required will be at the outset, where each case ought to be fearlessly met, and sifted to the utter-

most, and every right expedient bethought of and tried, that, if possible, it may be shifted aside from the parochial fund, and devolved in a better way on the thrift and labor of the applicant himself, on the duty of his relatives, or on the charities of private benevolence. . . . When the people come to perceive that this is the way in which their applications are met, they simply, in by far the greater number of instances, cease to apply. Those who are conscious of means which they know that it is in the power of a careful scrutiny to detect, will forbear to offer themselves. They who are idly disposed will shrink from the hazard of having their plea refuted by some employment being put into their hands, which they would rather decline. Some who have kind relatives or neighbors will rather continue to draw from them in secret than subject their private matters to the inquisition of a vestry. . . .

If the experiment shall prosper it will not be because of the great supplies which are raised, but because of the great care which has been observed in the administration of them. . . .

Though the private liberality of the rich in a parish to its poor ranks as one of those expedients, and is much to be preferred over that open and visible distribution that is so fitted both to corrupt and degrade the objects of it, yet may the rich also be, to a certain degree, the instruments of the very same mischief that we have now charged on an incautious public administration. They ought never to forget that the best economic gift which can possibly be rendered to the lower orders is a habit of self-respect and self-dependence; and for this purpose

they ought not to disdain a free and frequent intercourse with them. This of itself will go far to elevate the mind and the manners of our peasantry; and it is a very great mistake that the visit of rank or affluence to a poor man's cottage is not welcomed unless it be followed up by some beggarly ministration. Wherever a case of obvious and ascertained distress meets the philanthropist on his walk it is his part to approve that his benevolence is real by "willingness to distribute," by "readiness to communicate." But he should recollect that there are also other topics than those of mere almsgiving upon which he might most pertinently and most profitably hold fellowship with his humbler brethren of the species, and shortly earn the confidence and regard of all his neighborhood. The education of their families; the good order of their houses; the little schemes of economy and management in which he requests their co-operation; the parish bank, for which he has to solicit their agency and their contributions; the counsel, the service, the little presents of courtesy, by which he does not sink but signalize them; the cheap and simple attentions by which the cottage children can be made happy, and their parents grateful; those thousand nameless graces and benignities by which the accomplished female can light up a moral gladness in the hamlet which she has selected as the theatre, both of many duties and of many friendships. There is a way of prosecuting all these without alimenting the rapacity or the sordidness of our laboring classes, a way that is best learned in the school of experience; and after, perhaps, the many blunders which have been committed, and the many mor-

tifying disappointments which have been sustained by the young practitioner in the art of well-doing. It is not by money alone that he is to manifest his kindness. There are innumerable other ways, and better ways of doing it, and in the prosecution of which he might, in truth, refine and heighten that delicacy which he else would overbear. Let there be but good-will in his heart; and this, amid all his forbearance in giving, nay, amid all his refusals, when he apprehends a cunning or a corruption in the object of them—this will at length shine forth upon the people, in the lustre of its own moral evidence, and will give for him an ascendency that might be convertible to the fine result of their permanent amelioration. . . .

The truth is that under a good management, though with very slender means, the first difficulty which shall meet the vestry will not be how to find the adequate supplies, but how to dispose of the unappropriated and accumulating surplus. . . . In these circumstances the clergyman who is aware of the mischiefs of public charity might be tempted to lay an arrest on the liberality of his parishioners and hearers. But better far would it be that he kept this liberality agoing, nay, stimulated it the more, and then impressed such a direction on the produce of it as went not to corrupt the people, but to elevate and to moralize them. He might do them harm by a large public distribution for the relief of indigence, whether the means of it were provided by a poor-rate or free-will offerings. But there is no harm in thus meeting certain of the helpless and involuntary sufferings of our nature. There is none in so signalizing the dumb, and the blind, and the

lunatic of the parish. There is none, but quite the contrary, in bestowing of this spare and superfluous revenue in the erection or the support of village schools, and so adding still to your securities against pauperism by widening, through education, the moral distance between the habits of the people and a condition so degrading.

And there is something more to be taken into account than the eventual good of such a destination. It lends a most important facility to your present administration. It enables you to meet every applicant for relief with an argument that will moderate the tone of his demand and perhaps shame him altogether away from it. You can then tell him that by his forbearance, he leaves you in better condition for the relief of families still more helpless than his own; that he, in fact, will be a virtual contributor to the good of humanity, and to the interest of the rising generation, simply by shifting for himself and leaving your fund entire and untouched for higher charities; that he ought, on this ground, to make common cause with you, and that he renders a most important co-operation when he ceases to be burdensome and ministers with his own hands to his own necessities. . . .

[The recommendation of subdivision of parishes and the careful personal work of individual visitors is repeated.]

That member of the vestry does his business best, not who transmits the greatest number of applications from his territory, but who intercepts the greatest number; and who intercepts them not by his stern and haughty nega-

tive, but by his patient inquiry, and his friendly argument, and his kind offers of work, or of interest on behalf of the family. . . .

His work ceases because now the *vis medicatrix* works for him with all that primitive liberty and vigor which belongs to her. His office becomes at length a sinecure, and should he choose to lay it down, he may retire with the character of having best done the duties of a vestryman, because he gave the vestry nothing to do.

END OF VOL. II

PREFACE

NEARLY three years have now elapsed since the publication of the second volume of this work, during which time circumstances have occurred that have induced its author somewhat to change the plan of the concluding volume, and that have had the effect, furthermore, to retard, and he fears also to enfeeble the execution of it. What he more particularly alludes to is the recent history of those popular combinations which have taken place all over the country, for a rise of wages. The truth is that he had scarcely begun to investigate the connection between a poor-rate and the price of labor, when the latter of these two elements, although in a different connection, became the subject of a most interesting practical treatment by Parliament on the one hand, and by the population on the other. He has long regarded it as one of the most mischievous effects of the English pauperism that it depresses the wages of labor, and that, beneath the rate of its own compensations; and, of course, as one of the chief blessings to society that would follow in the train of its abolition that we should forthwith behold a better paid as well as a better principled class of workmen than before. He has ever been on the side of a more liberal remuneration for industry. But when the people took this cause into their own hands and proceeded to enforce it in their own peculiar way, he could not but regret that a cause so

worthy of the highest efforts, both of philanthropy and patriotism, should have been dishonored by the outrage and the violence wherewith it was associated. He has not, therefore, stepped out of his course in order to treat of combinations. The subject has been thrown across his path, and he must have turned aside if he had shunned the encounter with it. The workmen of England have aggravated, by their own misconduct, the prejudices of the more affluent orders against the cause of their advancement in society. And it might serve to appease these prejudices of the wealthy, as well as to tranquillize the feelings and to elevate the habits of the poor, if, instead of that way of turbulence which they have tried and found so ineffectual, they could be made to understand that more excellent way upon which, without noise, or uproar, or rebellion, they might raise the comfort and the sufficiency of their own condition, and at length attain to a permanently higher status in the commonwealth.

[The author explains his desire to be understood by the working people, and at the same time to remove erroneous opinions of the rich. "There is a certain prevalent imagination among the higher classes that the cheapness of British labor lies at the very foundation of our country's prosperity and strength. Now, in advocating the cause of a higher remuneration for industry, we have to combat this imagination."

At this point he alludes to the continued trial of his parish principles in Glasgow under his successors. Their success proved that the working of his theory did not rest on his own personal direction and ability of administration, but on the soundness of the principle itself.]

VOLUME III

CHAPTER XVII

ON THE WAGES OF LABOR

THE difficulties of removing such a great national evil as pauperism are of two classes, which are wholly distinct the one from the other. . . . The first difficulties are those which are presented by the economic condition of the lower orders. They are such difficulties as have their seat among the circumstances of the people. It is the imagination of many that to do away a legal provision for indigence would be to abandon a large population to a destitution and distress that were most revolting to humanity, and, in as far as this imagination is true, it offers a most formidable difficulty, and one, indeed, which should foreclose the question altogether. The population ought not to be so abandoned; and if, in virtue of the abolition of pauperism, they shall become worse either in comfort or character than before, then this abolition ceases to be desirable. We happen to think that no such consequence would ensue, and that on the supplies of public charity being withdrawn there would not only be much less of actual want in the country, but that this want would be sure to find relief, and in a way greatly more consistent both with the comfort and virtue of families.

[The second class of difficulties arises in the minds of members of the ruling classes. The reformer must encounter the prejudices of educated men.]

They who have the constitutional right, either to arrest his proceedings or to allow of them, must first be satisfied; and whether from honest conviction or from the tenacity of a wedded adherence to old and existing methods, they may stand in the way of all innovation. Ere he come into contact with the human nature of the question among the poor themselves, he may have far greater obstacles against him in the law of the question, and in the obstinate prejudice or wilfulness of those men with whom the right is vested of adjudging or administering for the poor. . . . It may be true that there is a system of utmost facility which, if adopted, shall be of omnipotent effect to expel pauperism from a parish, and with less want and wretchedness among its families than before; and also true, that there shall be a weary struggle with the incredulity and perverse misconceptions of influential men, ere the system shall be suffered to have a trial. . . .

At the same time it ought to be remembered that if the natural difficulties of the problem be so very light and conquerable, its political difficulties must, of necessity, subside, and at length vanish altogether. It is the imagination, in fact, of the greatness of its essential difficulties that mainly gives rise to the opposition of our influential men, or what is still more hopeless than their active opposition, the listlessness and apathy of their despair. Could we succeed in proving that there is really nothing in the condition of the lower orders which presents an insuper-

able barrier to the abolition of pauperism, the barrier of prejudice and dislike, on the part of the higher orders, to any radical change, must finally give way. Truth may be withstood long, but it cannot be withstood eternally. The provisions of law will at length be made to accord with the principles of nature; and whatever shall be found by experience, in the human nature of the question, to be most wholesome for the people, the law of the question must, in time, be moulded into conformity therewith.

[Here is repeated the argument of the previous volume: that the vastness of the problem frightens men from imperial legislation, while if the task were undertaken by gradual stages the difficulties would melt away.]

But no sooner do we get rid of one antipathy than we are instantly met by another. The very men who have no credit for what is great may have no value for what is gradual. When to get the better of their incredulity about the efficacy of our process we tell them how slow it is, then we have just as hard an encounter as before with their indifference. . . . In the first instance there is the same unbelief in the possibility of all pauperism being done away as they would have in a magical performance; and in the second instance, whatever is to be done in the way of reformation has no charm for them unless it can be done with a rapidity that would be altogether magical. . . . We cannot devise for them a scheme that shall at once be moderate enough in its aim to suit the narrowness of their apprehensions and at the same time speedy enough in its operation to suit the extravagance of their wishes.

When they hear the promise of a total deliverance, they spurn it away from them as romantic. When the romance is mitigated by the proposal that the deliverance shall be very gradual, they spurn it away from them as tardy. . . . It is between those who are hopeless and those who are precipitate that it is so difficult to extricate a nation from the evils of a wrong domestic economy. . . .

It is to be observed that indigence may arise from two sources—either from inability for work, or from the inadequacy of its wages. The original pauperism of England, it is said, was restricted to those who were poor from impotency, and it is regarded by many as an abuse or corruption of it, that it should ever have been extended to able-bodied laborers in order to make up any deficiency in their wages. Now the great aim at present is to repress pauperism within its original limits by putting an end altogether to this latter application of the poor's fund, thus separating between the distress which age and impotency bring upon the laboring classes, and the distress which is occasionally brought upon them by the fluctuations in the price of labor. There are some who would be satisfied with the lopping off of this last excrescence from the system of poor laws in England, while others contemplate the possibility and admit the desirableness of an ulterior reformation. We think that there is a gradual process for the extermination of the system in both its branches, which is alike applicable, and from the outset of it, to each of them. Yet this does not supersede the importance of discussing the effects of a poor-rate

when applied in aid of defective wages. We feel, however, that this will require a few preliminary explanations.

The first thing to be attended to is the way in which the price of any article brought to market is affected by the variations of its supply on the one hand, and of the demand for it on the other. The holders of sugar, for example, after having reserved what they need for their own use, bring the whole surplus to market, where they dispose of it in return for those other things which they do need. It must be quite obvious that if there be more of this sugar exposed than there is a demand for, the great force of the competition will be among the sellers to get it off their hands. Each will try to outstrip the others by holding out a greater inducement for purchasers to buy from him, and this he can only do by holding it out to them on cheaper terms. It is thus that each tries to undersell the rest, or, in other words, the great supply of any article of exchange is always sure to bring down the price of it.

On the other hand, let the same article have been sparingly brought into the market, insomuch that, among the buyers, there is a demand for it to a greater extent than it is to be had. The force of the competition now changes place. It is among the purchasers instead of the sellers. Each will try to outstrip his neighbors by holding out a larger inducement to the holders of a commodity now rare, and, therefore, in more urgent request than usual. This he can only do by offering a greater price for it. It is thus that each tries to overbid the other, or, in other

words, the small supply of any article of exchange is always sure to bring up the price of it. . . .

There is nought in the interposition of money to affect this process. Its office is merely to facilitate the exchange of commodities. . . .

[Some articles of consumption are more liable to extreme fluctuations of price than others. Generally speaking, the necessaries of life are far more powerfully affected in the price of them by a variation in their quantity than are the luxuries of life. If grain is supplied in diminished quantity the price will rise much more rapidly than that of rum or wine, which are luxuries. If the standard of life is high in a population, the people can weather a season of high prices for food by cutting off luxuries in drink and dress and ornament. They will still have food, although they delay the purchase of articles not entirely necessary to existence. Higher prices of food tend to draw away supplies from more distant markets, and thus the want in one country may be met by the superfluity in another. In exchange for this importation of food the products of manufacture are exported, and foreign commerce is stimulated.]

Wages form the price of labor; and this price, like that of every other commodity, is determined by the proportion which obtains between the supply of it in the market and the effective demand for it. Should the supply be diminished, or the demand increase, the price rises. Should the supply be increased, or the demand slacken, the price falls. . . .

Now, labor might be considered in the light of a marketable commodity, the supply of which is measured by

the number of laborers, and the price of which is regulated, as in other instances, by the proportion between this supply and the demand. This price partakes with that of the necessaries of life in being liable to great fluctuation; and, on the same principle, too, but in a sort of reverse direction. It is the urgent need of subsistence which so raises articles of the first necessity, even upon a very slight shortcoming from their usual quantity in the market, and it is the same urgent need of subsistence which so lowers the price of labor, and that upon a very slight overplus in the number of laborers. What, in fact, looking to one side of the negotiation, may be called the demand of the capitalists for labor—when looking to the other side of it may be called the demand of the laborers for employment; and, in this latter demand, there may be all the importunity and vehemence of a demand for the necessaries of life. . . . Men must have subsistence; and if employment be the essential stepping-stone to this, men must have employment; and thus it is that capitalists have the same control over workmen, when there is an excess in their number, which the holders of the necessaries of life have over their customers, when there is a deficiency in the crop. And so the price of labor, too, is a most tremulously variable element, and has as wide a range of fluctuation as the price of corn. A very small excess in the number of laborers will create a much greater proportional reduction in their wages. Should twenty thousand weavers of muslin be adequate, on a fair recompense for their work, to meet the natural demand that there is in that branch of manufacture, an additional thou-

sand of these unemployed, and going about with their solicitations and offers among the master-manufacturers, would bring a fearful distress and deficiency on the circumstances of the whole body. The wages would fall by much more than a twentieth part of what they were originally; and thus by a very trifling excess in the number of workmen might a very sore and widely felt depression be brought upon the comfort and sufficiency of the lower orders.

Now, however melancholy this contemplation might be in the first instance, yet, by dwelling upon it a little further, we shall be led to discover certain outlets and reparations that might cause us to look more hopefully than ever on the future destinies of our species. One thing is clear, that if so small a fractional excess in the supply of labor over its demand is enough to account for a very great deficiency in its remuneration, then, after all, it may lie within the compass of a small fractional relief to bring back the remuneration to its proper level, and so restore the desirable equilibrium between the wages of a workman and the wants of his family. . . . Could any expedient be devised by which the number of laborers might be more equalized to the need that there is for them, then, instead of the manufacturers having so oppressive control over the workmen, workmen might in some degree have a control over manufacturers. We should certainly regard it as a far more healthful state of the community if our workmen, instead of having to seek employment, were to be sought after, and that masters had to go in quest of service, rather than that labor-

ers had to go a-begging for it. It is most piteous to see a population lying prostrate and overwhelmed under the weight of their own numbers; nor are we aware of a finer object, both for the wisdom and benevolence of patriotism, than to devise a method by which the lower orders might be rescued from this state of apparent hopelessness. This would be done if they were only relieved from the pressure of that competition by which they now elbow out, or beat down each other; but nothing more certain, than that not till the number of workmen bears a less proportion to the need which there is for them, will they be able to treat more independently with their employers, or make a stand against all such terms of remuneration as would degrade their families beneath the par of human comfort. . . .

We cannot enter upon this argument without adverting, in the first instance, to the celebrated theory of Mr. Malthus on the subject of population. And one thing at least is manifest, that the very comprehension of his views has retarded the practical application of them to any question of political or domestic economy. He writes in reference to the species and the world; and the mind of his reader, by being constantly directed to the population of the whole globe, and to the relative capacities for their subsistence, that are diffused over the surface of it, can make escape from his conclusions by roaming in imagination over the vast regions that are yet unpeopled and the wilds that, however rich in nature's luxuriance, have been yet untrodden by human footsteps. The speculation is admitted by many to be true who, nevertheless, would

lie upon their oars till the last acre on the face of the earth was brought to its highest possible cultivation. The reply to an alleged excess of population in Britain, is, that New Holland offers a space equal to twenty Britains, which has yet been unentered upon, and that till this space be fully occupied there is only one expedient which we have to do with, even that of emigration; that, meanwhile, the other expedient, or a preventive check upon the increase of population, is wholly uncalled for, that it may lie in reserve for that futurity which is still at an indefinite distance from us; and that when agriculture has done its uttermost upon all lands it will be fully soon enough to think of keeping the human species within that maximum of human subsistence which shall then have been arrived at.

But, after all, it does not necessarily follow that the pressure of the world's population upon the world's food will remain unfelt till the latter has attained its maximum. It is quite enough for this effect that the tendency to an increase of population is greater than the tendency to an increase of food. . . . It is quite an imaginary comfort to the suffering families of England that there are tracts in New Holland capable of maintaining a tenfold population to that of the British empire. They cannot transport themselves there in an instant. They cannot raise at once the means, either for their own emigration or for the cultivation of this unbroken territory; and if not at once, then it must take a time ere this consummation is gained; and it is simple enough, for the upholding of a continuous pressure, that during that time there is a

greater force of progress in the world's population than in the world's food.

It were sure a better and a blander community at home, if instead of the people being urged on to the very margin of the country's capabilities to maintain them, they had rather ease and amplitude and sufficiency in their own native land, and were kept a good way within the point of emigration.

It says much for the soundness of the principles of Mr. Malthus, that they always become more evident the narrower the field is on which they are exemplified; and, consequently, the nearer the inspection is to which they are submitted. When he affirms, in reference to the whole species, that there is an evil in premature marriages, for that the population of the world are thereby caused to press inconveniently on the food of the world, one finds a refuge from his conclusions in the imagination of many fertile but yet uncultivated tracts that might yield the greatest possible scope to the outlet of families for centuries to come. . . . But one needs not his philosophy to feel the whole force of his principle within the limits of a family, where the premature marriage of a son, who had rashly and previously to any right establishment of himself in the world, entered upon this engagement, would be deplored by all the members of it as a most calamitous visitation; and that, too, both on account of the present expense, and also the eventual expense of a rising progeny. It would be no consolation in these circumstances to be told of the millions of acres, both at home and abroad, that could be turned to the sustenance of millions of human beings. . . .

In like manner would we plead for an exemption from the obloquy that attaches to this theory when, instead of speculating and providing for the whole world, we concentrate our views on a single parish and recall our scattered imagination from other continents and other climes to that which lies directly and familiarly before us, among the population of our own little vicinity. And the truth is that the poor laws of England tend to isolate each of its parishes from the rest of the world, and so to bring it more clearly and definitely before us as a separate object of contemplation. More particularly do they throw a barrier around each, which, though not altogether insuperable, has yet been of great efficacy in hemming each population within its own boundaries and closing up the outlets to emigration. It is in this way that the most encouraging offers of a settlement in distant lands are often resisted by the English peasantry. They are aware of a certain right by the law of pauperism upon their own native soil, and this they are not willing to forego. They feel that they have a property at home which they would relinquish by the measure, and that reasoning, therefore, which blinds the eye of the reader against the truth of the general speculation is not applicable in present circumstances to the case that is before us. And the poor laws not only check the egress of the redundant population to our distant colonies, they go a certain way to impede and to lessen the free interchange of people from one parish to another, both by begetting in each a jealousy of new settlers and augmenting the natural preference for home by the superadded tie, that then

they have their proper and their rightful inheritance, the benefit of which can be got far more directly and conveniently when on the spot than when they remove themselves to a distant part of the country. But even when so removed they still hold on their parish, and, like non-resident proprietors, can have their rent transmitted to them, and may, in fact, be as burdensome as if they still resided within its limits. It is thus that the vestry, whence the dispensations of pauperism proceed, may be regarded as a kind of adhesive nucleus around which the people of each parish accumulate and settle and so present us with as distinct an exemplification of the theory of Mr. Malthus as if each were in itself a little world, the affairs and difficulties of which may, at the same time, be considered without his theory being in our heads at all. . . . We happen to regard Mr. Malthus's Theory of Population as incontrovertible. Yet we do not link with it our reprobation of English pauperism any more than we would link with it our reprobation of a precipitate marriage in a destitute and unprepared family. Let his theory be execrated as it may, let it even be out-argued by its adversaries, this will not overthrow any of those maxims of domestic prudence that might be learned at the mouth of every ordinary housewife, and neither will it overthrow any demonstration of those evils in pauperism which, with or without a philosophical treatise, are quite obvious to the home-bred sagacity of country squires and parish overseers.

CHAPTER XVIII

ON THE EFFECT OF A POOR-RATE, WHEN APPLIED IN AID OF DEFECTIVE WAGES

In every parish there is a certain quantity of work to be done, and a certain number of laborers would suffice for the doing of it. Some of them may be imported from abroad, and, on the other hand, some of the native workmen may have gone beyond their own parochial limits in quest of employment. Still, with or without these movements, there is a certain number in the parish of able or available laborers who, if barely adequate to the labor that is required, will be hired upon a fair remuneration, but who, if they exceed, will be glad to accept of an inferior remuneration rather than want employment altogether. It is this competition which brings down the wages of labor; and, on the principle that is already unfolded, a very small excess in the number of laborers may give rise to a very large reduction in the price of labor. It is in vain to say that this excess will naturally discharge itself upon other places. So it would in a natural state of things. So it always does in those parishes of Scotland where a compulsory provision is unknown. But in England, where the practice is now established of ministering from the poor-rate not merely to the indigence of age

and sickness and impotency, but to the indigence of able-bodied, though ill-paid, industry, this excess is not so easily disposed of. There is a principle of adherence in the system which detains and fastens it upon the parish where once this excess has been formed, and we hold it very instructive to look at the various expedients by which it has been met, and at the uniform failure which has attended them.

The distress of inferior wages is, in the first instance, felt by the fathers of large families; and, accordingly, they are the first who have been benefited by the extension of the legal charity of England beyond those cases for which it has been alleged by the defenders of the system as established by the act of Elizabeth that it was strictly and originally intended. Certain it is that if there really was any such limitation designed in the primary construction of the statute it is now very generally disregarded, and there is nought more common, particularly in the southern counties, than a composition of wages and poor-rate, both of which are made to enter into the maintenance of an able-bodied laborer. There are two questions generally asked of the applicant for parish relief, and which may be regarded as furnishing the data that fix the parish allowance: "What do you earn?" and "What is the number of the family that you have to maintain?" and if the wages be held inadequate to the family, the deficiency, in most instances, is held to be as firm a ground of application as the utter helplessness of impotency or disease. The defect in wages is eked out by a weekly allowance from the poor-rate; and he who in other

circumstances would have been left as an independent workman upon his own resources, becomes, under this system, a dependent upon legal charity.

This, then, is the first application of poor-rate to wages which claims our regard. Before that single and able-bodied men can have the benefit of this poor-rate, the parents of families must have been visited by its allowances, and that just in proportion to the number of their offspring. It is a premium on population and must serve to perpetuate the cause of that mischief which it is designed to alleviate. There is a general feeling all over England of something wrong in this composition of wages with the parish allowance; and along with it a sort of anxiety in some places to vindicate their management from the imputation of a practice that is felt to be discreditable; so that when the question is put, whether it be the habit of the place to supplement defective wages out of the poor-rate, a very frequent reply is that it is never done by them, and that nothing is even given in consideration of a low wage, but only in consideration of a large family. This way of shifting it from one ground to another, though practically it makes no difference as to the effect of the regimen, yet is very instructive as to the rationale of its operation. Though Malthus had never written there could not be a more complete exposition than is given by the answers of unlettered and unsophisticated men, of the bearing that English pauperism has upon population. . . . Here we have parents paid out of a legal and compulsory fund because of the largeness of their families, and we may safely appeal to the common-

sense and sagacity of the most unspeculative minds, whether this must not add to the number of marriages in a parish; whether it does not slacken all those prudential restraints that else would have operated as a check upon their frequency; whether the hesitation and delay that, in a natural state of things, are associated with this step are not in a great measure overborne by the prospect thus held out, of a defence and a guarantee against the worst consequences of many a rash and misguided adventure. Must not marriages come earlier and therefore be more productive under such a system than they otherwise would be? Or, in other words, is not this remedy for the low wages, induced by an excess of people, the likeliest instrument that could be devised, not only for keeping up the excess, but for causing it to press still more on the already urged and overburdened resources of this small parochial community?

Sometimes the formal parish allowance begins immediately with the event of matrimony, insomuch that single men, on being refused the parochial aid for eking out their miserable wages, have threatened to marry, have put their threat into execution and been instantly preferred in consequence to a place on the vestry roll among those who have qualified in like manner. When marriage is thus made a qualification for an allowance from the poor-rate, one does not see how the poor-rate can escape the charge of being a bounty upon marriage. And, accordingly, this evil is so much felt and deprecated that in certain places they have resolved to abolish the distinction between the allowances to single and married men and

actually pay all alike, though at a great additional expense in the meantime; and this to arrest and lighten, if possible, that coming tide of population wherewith they fear to be overwhelmed.

But we are not to suppose that by this compromise between the payers of charity and the payers of labor all the able-bodied of a parish are admitted to employment. There is a limit to the work of a parish, but while this economy lasts there can be no limit to the number of the workmen, who, of course, after various expediencies and ingenuities have been practised for the purpose of intercepting them with something to do, at length overflow into a state of total idleness. One of these expedients is to send round the men who have not fallen into employment in the regular and customary way among the farmers with the lure of getting their work on very cheap terms, as the parish will pay the difference between their low wages and the sum that might be deemed necessary for their entire maintenance. It is no doubt an advantage to the farmer to have his work done cheaply, but where is the advantage if he have no work for them to do? Every one department may be already filled and supersaturated with labor. For the accommodation of idle hands threshing machines may be put down, and a ruder and clumsier agriculture may have been perpetuated, and all ingenious devices by which the human mind could contrive to abridge labor may have been prescribed, and just that human muscles may be kept in as full requisition as possible. Yet all is ineffectual; and many a weary circuit often have these roundsmen to make, knocking at every

door for admittance, yet everywhere refused, till at length, after all their attempts are exhausted, they devolve the whole burden of their existence on the parish, and gather into a band of supernumeraries.

And exceedingly various have been the devices for their employment. Sometimes they have been congregated into workhouses where they are provided with any employment that can be got for them by the parish overseers. At other times they have been farmed out to a speculator, who has turned the workhouse into a factory, and possesses himself of their services at a rate exceedingly beneath the market price of labor. At other times they may be seen in a kind of disorderly band, laboring either upon parish roads or in sand and gravel pits. The value of what they render in this way for their subsistence is in a general way very insignificant. The truth is that an increasing population can no more be supplied indefinitely with profitable work than they can be supplied indefinitely with money or with food. It is more for a moral effect than for the worth of the labor that these various modes of industry are laid upon them. Better give them something to do than that they should be wholly idle. Though even this object is not always accomplished, and in many of the agricultural parishes they may be seen lounging out a kind of lazzaroni life, upon a weekly pittance from the vestry, in the fields or on the highway.

There is one very sore evil in this system. It has distempered altogether the relationship between a master and his servants. The latter feel less obligation to the former for being taken into his employment, seeing that they

have a refuge in poor-rates from the destitution which in other countries attaches to a state of idleness. They are not so careful in seeking work for themselves, as the law has rendered them in some measure independent of it. . . . They care little though they should be dismissed, and this has often the effect of making them idle and insolent. . . .

After all, the employment which is given for the purpose of mitigating the rate is little better than idleness in disguise. In the case of roundsmen the whole remuneration is made up partly of wages from the master and partly of an allowance from the parish; and there is nothing more common than when they have wrought to a certain amount, or for so many hours in the day, to take the rest of the day very much to themselves; and though still under the semblance of doing something at an allotted task, literally to do nothing. It is a familiar saying amongst them that " Our master has now got all that time in the day from us which he has paid for; what the parish pays for is our own." And this proportion, even though fair and accurately struck, leaves a sad vacancy in their hands, which is often filled up with positive mischief. At all events it wholly corrupts and relaxes them as laborers. . . .

It is further a most grievous necessity in their state that they should be forced to commence their life as paupers; that they should be familiarized from a tender age to the allowances of the parish vestry; that all generous and aspiring independence should be smothered when in embryo within them, and a new race should arise so fos-

tered and so prepared as to outstrip their predecessors in the rapacity and the meanness and all the sordid or degrading habits of pauperism.

It comes to the same result whether they are sent as roundsmen or are wholly paid and employed by the parish as supernumeraries. In the latter case they may give their labor either in a workhouse or out of doors; but both from the difficulty of supplying work, and from the lax superintendence into which the whole system is so apt to degenerate, it may be regarded as a vast nursery both of idleness and vice all over England. We do not hesitate to charge on the pauperism of England the vast majority of its crimes, detaining by its promises within the borders of every parish a greater number of families than it can well and comfortably provide for, luring, as it were, more into existence than it can meet with right and requisite supplies, and after conducting them onward toward manhood leaving them in a state of unsated appetency, and withal in leisure for the exercise of their ingenuities by which to devise its gratification. We cannot conceive of a state of society more fermentative of crime, from the thousand unnoticed and unnoticeable pilferments that we fear are in daily and very extended operation among the laboring classes, to the higher feats of villany, the midnight enterprise, the rapine, sealed, if necessary, with blood, the house assault, the highway depredation.

Simply if labor were better paid it would not be so.

[Repeating the argument that wages are depressed because there is an excess of population of laboring men

offering their service in competition with each other, he goes on:]

In this view of the matter we may see at once the cruelty of a poor-rate; how, in the first instance, by the encouragement which it gives to precipitate marriage it multiplies the people beyond the rate at which they would otherwise have multiplied; how, in the second instance, by holding out to all of them a right and property in their native parish it detains the people and closes up, at it were, those outlets of emigration by which relief might have been obtained from the competition of a most hurtful excess; how, in the third instance, it provides for this surplus of laborers, but on terms which lie at the arbitration of the upper classes in society; how, in the fourth instance, it gives to the masters a mighty advantage over their regular laborers and enables them to bring the general wages of husbandry indefinitely near to the parish allowance for roundsmen and supernumeraries; thus, in fact, under the guise of kindness to the stragglers of the community operating a most injurious reduction on the state and comfort of the whole body, grinding down the lower orders to the very point of starvation, and with a malignity not the less provoking that it works by a system on the face of which there are constantly playing the smiles of mercy, and in the support of which the sweetest poesy hath been heard to pour forth her dulcet strains into the ear of weeping sentimentalism.

We do not need anything half so ponderous as the theory of population for the whole species to be assured

that at this moment there are more people than can be maintained with comfort in our agricultural parishes. The thing is plainly felt all over England, and this feeling cannot be overborne by any argument either for or against a theory. . . . And, along with the palpable exhibition of an over-peopled parish, there is the equally palpable habit, both of most abandoned licentiousness and most improvident marriages. The number of illegitimate children alone superinduces such an excess upon the other population as is quite adequate to a great and general reduction in the price of labor. . . .

It were a very crude legislation for giving effect to the speculation of Mr. Malthus to define the earliest age at which people should marry. . . . It were striving to bring about a right result by a compensation of errors. . . . The law of pauperism has given undue encouragement to matrimony; and it has been proposed by a law of matrimony to repress the encouragement. It is the excess of legislation which has done the mischief, and the best method of doing it away is simply to lop off the excess, and not to counteract one foolish law by another. . . .

There can be no doubt that the abolition of the law of pauperism would bring on a somewhat later average of matrimony among the people. Should this abolition ever take place, and the consequent period of marriage become the subject of political arithmetic, there can be no doubt that its tables will exhibit a more advanced age, on the whole, at which females marry under the new system than under the present one. . . . There would even

without the law of pauperism be a premature entry upon this alliance, but not so premature on the whole. . . . Many still would be the outbreakings of irregularity and folly, but if at all diminished there would necessarily be a certain shift for the better in the average of matrimony, and it were in the face of all arithmetic . . . to deny that this must tell on the births of a parish and its population. We do not say that profligacy would be exterminated with the law of pauperism, but it would be checked; and, we venture to affirm, that were the supplies of pauperism withdrawn from all future illegitimates there would be an instantaneous diminution of their number. In all these ways the market for labor would be less crowded than it is now, and laborers would stand on a higher vantage-ground in the negotiations between them and their employers. There would be some fewer workmen than before, and this is enough to cause much higher wages. This is a most important compensation that awaits the lower classes of England, after that the dispensations of pauperism have been withdrawn from them.

[Here is repeated at some length the statement of the method for gradual abolition of pauperism and the substitution of the system of voluntary parish charity.]

Emigration to our colonies is worthy of the utmost support from Government, if connected with a process for the abolition of pauperism. But should the system of pauperism continue, it will operate no sensible relief in England. It has been likened to a safety-valve, but it is a valve, the very lifting and opening of which implies the

elasticity within of a state of compression and violence; and up to this state it will remain, notwithstanding the successive escapes of a redundant population. The creative process will always maintain a balance with the relieving process; and a people must be in distress when the difficulties of home are so nearly in equilibrium with its charms as to place them on the eve of desire and deliberation to renounce it forever. And besides, the poor laws act in an opposite direction to the offers and the encouragements of emigration; though, if connected with any plan for the abolition of them, we cannot conceive a better way, both of smoothing the transition and of keeping the country in a clear and healthful state after the transition has been effected. But it is to the reaction at home that we look for our best securities against any shock or disaster that might be apprehended to our families from the overthrow of pauperism. When charity is altogether detached from the remuneration of labor, this of itself will keep off a very wide and wasting contamination from the spirit of our peasantry, and they will again recover the honest pride of independence. Still more would this feeling grow in strength and sensibility were they trained to the habit of small but constant accumulation. It is at this crisis that a parish savings-bank might achieve a wondrous transformation on the state of the people, by begetting a sense of property among laborers. . . . Once that the turning-point has been made from being a pauper to being a possessor, a new ambition is felt, and a new object comes to be intensely prosecuted. This is a better expedient for postponing the date of

marriage than any act of Parliament. The days were in Scotland, when it was customary, during the virtuous attachment of years, for the parties to fill up the interval with those frugalities and labors by which they made a provision for their future household, and there is no doubt that a savings-bank is fitted to inspire with a similar purpose those who repair to it. . . .

[Here are added a few technical suggestions in respect to ways of avoiding evils arising out of the conflict of settlement laws as applied to various districts. It is recommended, in justice to the trial parishes, that if laborers having settlement elsewhere invade these favored districts they lose their legal claim to relief. But the author thinks there would be comparatively little abuse, since the trial parishes would be averse to giving employment to strangers so long as any at home asked work.]

CHAPTER XIX

ON SAVINGS-BANKS

WITHOUT the co-operation of their own virtuous endeavors there seems no possible way of doing good to the laboring classes, or of helping them upward from a lower to a more secure and elevated place in the commonwealth. But we can see a very patent way to it in such habits and resources as, generally speaking, are within their reach. It is for them, and for them only, to regulate the supply of laborers. . . . The frugality of a workman might length, through a means of a savings-bank, land him in a small capital, and there is one effect of a capital in the hands of the laboring classes which must be quite obvious. It were a barrier between them and that urgent immediate necessity which gives such advantage to their employers in the question of wages. A man on the brink of starvation has no command in this negotiation. He will gladly accept of such terms as are offered rather than perish of hunger; and it is thus, by their improvidence and their reckless expenditure in prosperous times, that on the evil day they lie so much at the mercy and dictation of their superiors. The possession of a capital, and that not a very great one, by each individual laborer, or rather by each of a considerable number of laborers, would reverse the

character of the negotiation entirely. They could stand out against miserable wages. They could afford to be idle; and, while so, the stock of the commodity which they work, and wherewith the market is for the present glutted, would soon melt away, and the price of their labor be speedily restored to its fair and comfortable level. . . . The whole platform of humble life would take a higher level than at present; and we repeat that, to every man who felt aright, it were a satisfaction and a triumph then to recognize a hale and well-conditioned peasantry.

We are aware of a jealousy here, and how much it is that capitalists have suffered by unlooked-for conspiracies on the part of the workmen. We are also aware of the sums that have been subscribed by the latter for the express purpose of maintaining all the members of the conspiracy in idleness, and so of holding out till masters should surrender to their terms. It is on these considerations that an apprehension has been felt, in certain quarters, lest savings-banks should arm the mechanics and workmen of our land with a dangerous power, and place at the mercy of their caprice the interest of all the other orders in society. This, at least, is a concession of the efficacy of these institutions for all the purposes on account of which we would argue in their favor, and they who fear lest provident banks should make the lower orders too rich, must at all events allow, that with care and conduct on their part, there is a capability amongst them for becoming rich enough to be wholly independent of the supplies of pauperism. While we have no doubt that the

power of becoming rich enough is in their own hands, we cannot sympathize with the feelings of those who fear lest they should be too rich. We should like to see them invested with a certain power of dictation as to their own wages. We should like to see them taking full advantage of all that they have fairly earned in the negotiation with their employers. We should like to see a great stable independent property in the hands of the laboring classes, and their interest elevated to one of the high co-ordinate interests of the state. It were well, we think, if, by dint of education and virtue, they at length secured a more generous remuneration for labor so as that wages should bear a much higher proportion than they do now to the rent of land and the profit of stock, which form the other two ingredients in the value of a commodity. In this competition between capitalists and workmen we profess ourselves to be on the side of the latter, and would rejoice in every advantage which their own industry and their own sobriety had won for them. Rather than that, at the basis of society, we should have a heartless, profligate, and misthriven crew, on the brink of starvation, and crouching under all the humiliations of pauperism, we should vastly prefer an erect and sturdy and withal well-paid and well-principled peasantry, even though they should be occasionally able to strike their tools and to incommode their superiors by bringing industry to a stand. We have no doubt at the same time that the fear is an altogether extravagant one; that the two classes would soon come to a right adjustment, and that in particular the employers of labor would find it a far more comfortable

management when they had to do with a set of prosperous and respectable workmen, than when they have to do with the fiery and unreasonable spirits that so abound among a dissipated, ill-taught, and ill-conditioned population. In the strength of the principle of population, nature has provided a sufficient security against the prudential restraint upon marriages being carried too far, and we may, therefore, always be sure of an adequate supply of laborers for all the essential or important business of the land. But, through the law of pauperism, the restraint is not carried far enough, and now we are oppressed, in consequence, by a redundancy of numbers. By abolishing this law we simply leave the adjustment of the balance to nature. Legislators vacillate and are uncertain about the alternative of the people being either too rich or too poor. But nature, if unmeddled with by their interference, will so manage between the animal instincts on the one hand, and the urgencies of self-preservation, or the higher principles of the mind, upon the other, as that they shall neither be richer nor poorer than they ought to be.

This prejudice, however, against savings-banks, and this alarm for the independence of the lower orders, are very much confined to capitalists of narrow views and narrow circumstances. There is a delightful experience upon this subject that is multiplying and becoming more manifest every day, and which goes to prove how much the interest of the employer and that of the workman is at one. It is, that the expense of a well-paid laborer is in general more than made up by the superior worth and

quality of his service. The farmer, in those parishes where there is a composition of poor-rate with wages, does not find his account in that system. The labor is cheaper, but far less valuable in proportion; the work that is underpaid being done in a way so much more slovenly as to annihilate any advantage that might otherwise have accrued to the master. It is an advantage grasped at by men of limited means, and who find a saving in their immediate outlay to be of some consequence to them. But in the large and liberal scale, either of a great manufactory, or of any agricultural operation in which a sufficient capital is embarked, it is found that, with well-paid and well-principled workmen, the prosperity, both of masters and servants, is most effectually consulted. . . .

We are quite aware that it is not by the operation of but a few savings-banks, and a consequent capital in the hands of fractionally a very small number of our people, that a higher rate of wages will become general in the country. To work this effect there must be a corresponding generality in the cause. There will not be this general elevation in the status of laborers till there be a general habit of accumulation amongst them; and however much the individuals who do accumulate may benefit themselves, they must bear a certain proportion to the whole mass of the community ere they can work a sensible advancement upon the whole in the circumstances of the lower orders. Suppose a district of the land where the peasantry had by economy and good management attained a measure of independence, yet, if surrounded by other over-peopled districts, teeming with reckless and improvident families,

this were enough to keep down the remuneration of labor, even in that place where laborers had universally become little capitalists. It is thus that the neighborhood of Ireland will retard the progress of the lower orders in Britain toward a permanently higher state of comfort and sufficiency than they now enjoy. And the only way of neutralizing the competition from that quarter is just by carrying to them, too, the beneficent influences of education and training the people to that style and habit of enjoyment which will at length bring later marriages and a less oppressive weight of population along with it. We are abundantly sensible that the enlargement which we now contemplate as awaiting our operative classes must be the slow result of a moral improvement among themselves, which we fear will come on very gradually. But certain it is that, tardy as this way may be of a people's amelioration, it is the only way; and, at all events, there is nothing in the tumult and stir of those popular combinations which have so recently arisen in all parts of the land, that in the least degree is fitted to hasten it.

The whole philosophy of a subject may be exemplified within a narrow space. In its practical effects, pauperism is coextensive with our empire. In its principles, and in the whole rationale of its operation, it may be effectually studied even on the limited field of a small parochial community. . . . It is on this account that we prize so much the following little narrative by the overseer of Long Burton, in Dorsetshire, a parish with a population of only three hundred and twenty-seven, and therefore peculiarly adapted for the distinct exhibition of any in-

fluence which its parochial economy might have on the state of its inhabitants.

The overseer had three able-bodied men out of employment, and whom it fell of him to dispose of. The farmers all saturated with workmen could not take them in, and rather than send them to work upon the roads, he applied to a master-mason in the neighborhood, who engaged to take their services at the low rate of six shillings in the week, the parish to make up the deficiency to the three men, so as that they should, on the whole, have fifteen pence a week for each member of their families. The mason had previously in his employment from seven to ten men, at the weekly wage of eight or nine shillings each. But no sooner did he take in these three supernumeraries from the parish at six shillings than he began to treat anew with his old workmen, and threatened to discharge them if they would not consent to a lower wage. This of course would have thrown them all upon the parish, for the difference between their reduced and their present wages, upon perceiving which, the overseer instantly drew back his three men from the mason, and at length contrived to dispose of them otherwise. Upon this the wages of the journeymen masons reverted to what they were before.

Now this exemplifies the state of many agricultural parishes in England. There is a reserve of supernumeraries constantly on the eve of pouring forth over all the departments of regular labor, and on the instant of their doing so, forcing one and all of the regular workmen within the margin of pauperism. . . .

An overstocked market is either prevented or more speedily relieved simply by so many of the workmen ceasing to work, or by a great many working moderately. It is thus that a savings-bank is the happiest of all expedients for filling up the gaps and equalizing the deficiencies and shortening those dreary intervals of ill-paid work, which now occur so frequently to the great degradation and distress of every manufacturing population. We have always been of opinion that the main use of a savings-bank was not to elevate laborers into the class of capitalists, but to equalize and improve their condition as laborers. We should like them to have each a small capital, not wherewith to become manufacturers, but wherewith to control manufacturers. . . . The overplus of manufactured goods, which is the cause of miserable wages, would soon clear away under that restriction of work which would naturally follow on the part of men who did not choose, because they did not need, to work for miserable wages. What is now a protracted season of suffering and discontent to the lower orders, would, in these circumstances, become to them a short but brilliant career of holiday enjoyment. The report of a heavy downfall of wages, instead of sounding like a knell of despair in their ears, would be their signal for rising up to play. We have heard that there does not exist in our empire a more intellectual and accomplished order of workmen than the weavers of Paisley. It was their habit, we understand, to abandon their looms throughout the half or nearly the whole of each Saturday, and to spend this

time in gardening, or in the enjoyment of a country walk. It is true that such time might sometimes be viciously spent, but still we should rejoice in such a degree of sufficiency among our operatives as that they could afford a lawful day of every week for their amusement, and still more, that they could afford whole months of relaxed and diminished industry, when industry was under-paid. . . . The very habits which helped them to accumulate in the season of well-paid work would form the best guarantee against the vicious and immoral abuse of this accumulation in the season either of entire or comparative inactivity. We would expect an increase of reading, and the growth of literary cultivation, and the steady advancement of virtuous and religious habits, and, altogether, a greater weight of character and influence among the laboring classes as the permanent results of such a system. Instead of being the victims of every adverse movement in trade, they would become its most effective regulators.

CHAPTER XX

ON THE COMBINATIONS OF WORKMEN FOR THE PURPOSE OF RAISING WAGES

We fear that the cause of Savings-Banks may have sustained a temporary discredit from the recent conduct of workmen all over the country. The apprehension is, that, by a large united capital amongst them, they might get the upper hand of their employers altogether; that, in possession of means which could enable them to be idle, they may exercise a power most capriciously and most inconveniently for the other classes of society; that they may lay manufacturers under bondage by their impregnable combinations; and, striking work at the most critical and unexpected junctures, they may subject the whole economy of human life to jolts and sudden derangements which might be enough for its overthrow. These fears, enhanced though they have been of late by the outrages of workmen in various parts of the country, would speedily be dissipated, we believe, under the light of growing experience. The repeal of the combination laws has not even yet been adequately tried. The effervescence which has followed on that repeal is the natural and, we believe, the temporary effect of the anterior state of things. There was nothing more likely than that the people, when put in possession of a power which they felt to be altogether new,

would take a delight in the exercise of it, and break forth into misplaced and most extravagant manifestations. But if the conduct of the one party have been extravagant, the alarm of the other party we conceive to have been equally extravagant. We trust that the alarm may have been in part dissipated, ere Government shall be induced to legislate any further upon the subject, or to trench by any of its acts on the great principle of every man being entitled to make the most of his own labor, and also of acting in concert with his fellows for the production of a general benefit, as great as they can possibly make out to the whole body of laborers.

The repeal of the combination laws in England has been attended with consequences which strongly remind us of the consequences that ensued, after the Revolution, from the repeal of the game laws in France. The whole population, thrown agog by their new privilege, poured forth upon the country, and, variously accoutred, made war, in grotesque and unpractised style, upon the fowls of the air and the beasts of the field. In a few months, however, the extravagance subsided, and the people returned to their old quiescent habits and natural occupations. . . . We feel assured that, in like manner, this delirium of a newly awakened faculty among our British workmen will speedily pass away. They will at length become wise and temperate in the use of it. Neither party, in fact, well understand how to proceed in the unwonted relation wherein they now stand to each other. There is indefinite demand upon the one side; upon the other there are distrust and a most sensitive dread of en-

croachment. They have not yet completed their trial of strength, and just because in ignorance of each other's powers there are yet the effort and the excitation and the busy rivalship of a still undetermined conflict.

First, for the question, "What were the right enactment in regard to combinations, on the pure and abstract principles of law?". . . The great principle of law upon this, and upon every other subject is, that it should quadrate as much as it can possibly be made to do, with obvious morality. It is most desirable that whatever the legislature shall ordain to be a crime, and liable to punishment, should be felt as a crime by man's natural conscience. In every case, when there is a want of sympathy between the enactments of the statute-book and the dictates of natural virtue, there is an expenditure and loss of strength incurred by the government of a country, when it either ordains such enactments or carries them into effect. It is sure to lose ground thereby in public or popular estimation; and when the arbitrary regulations of a state are thus made to thwart and run counter to the independent feelings and judgments of men, this is certain to infuse an element of weakness into the body politic. The heart-burnings of him who suffers the penalty meet with powerful re-enforcement in the sympathy of all his fellows. He feels himself to be a martyr or a hero, and not a criminal; and, if treated as a criminal, this only puts a generous indignancy into his heart, in which he is supported by a kindred sentiment among all the free and noble spirits of the land. . . .

On the other hand, let law . . . be at one with the

voice of the heart, insomuch that all the denunciations of the statute-book are echoed to by the universal sense of justice in society, and every act of such a legislation will inconceivably strengthen the authority from which it emanates. . . .

Now we fear that there have been times when both these principles were traversed by Government in its management of combinations. For first, there seems nothing criminal in the act of a man ceasing to work at the expiry of his engagement, because not satisfied with his present wage, and desirous of a higher, or in the act of men confederated and doing jointly, or together, the same thing. On the contrary, it seems altogether fair that each should make as much as he can of his own labor, and that just as dealers of the same description meet and hold consultations for the purpose of enhancing the price of their commodity, so it should be equally competent for workmen to deliberate, and fix on any common, if it be not a criminal agreement, and that to enhance, if they can, the price of their own services.

There really is nothing morally wrong in all this; and, however a man may be treated on account of it as a delinquent by the law, he certainly is not regarded as a delinquent in the eye of natural conscience. It was because of this discrepancy, between nature and law, that we held it a good thing when, by the repeal act, it was expunged from the statute-book, and we hope that no subsequent act will again restore it. . . .

But, secondly, while Government on the one hand, by its penalties against the simple act of combination, put

forth a vigor far beyond the natural dimensions of this alleged enormity, they, on the other hand, have not been declared and rigorous enough against those real enormities, which are often attendant on combinations. . . . The members of a combination proceed to a very great and undeniable crime when they put forth a hand, or even utter dark and terrifying threats of violence to those who are willing to work. This is the point against which the whole force of legislation ought to be directed. . . . In consistency with their own great and glorious principle of freedom, they should guard to the uttermost the freedom of those who are willing from the tyranny and violence of those who are not willing to work. . . .

We must pass from the abstract jurisprudence of the question to the gross and living experience of the question. . . . It is not by the mere categories of ethical science that such a question ought to be determined. . . . It is only by a survey abroad, and over the domain of business and familiar life that he learns to modify, when needful, the generalizations of abstract thought by the demands of a felt and urgent expediency. . . . The complex workings of what may be termed the economic mechanism are altogether at one with the simplicities of theory. We hold that there are certain natural securities for a right adjustment between masters and servants, in the very relationship itself, which ought to supersede the interference of Government—we mean its interference for any other object than the enforcement of justice between the parties, and the protection of both from all sorts of personal violence. . . .

The great compensation for the evils of a strike is the power which masters have of replacing those who have struck by other hands. . . .

[Here follow illustrations of the success of masters replacing the striking workmen, and so bringing them to terms. Among the examples given, apparently without realizing the horror of the situation for the workmen, he complacently describes the importation of cheap workmen, which made the English workmen the slaves of the beggars of other countries. A capitalist tells his story thus:]

The men whom we employed were mostly Irishmen, but were picked up by us about the place. Had we not succeeded in getting them in that way we had determined to send a person to Ireland to recruit there. Our old hands, at least, such as we have chosen to employ, have returned to their work, and have, in a submissive manner, renounced the system of associations. Our new colliers continue with us, and are doing well.

These . . . examples, selected almost at random, from the mass that lies before us, . . . which serve to demonstrate the facility wherewith raw and unpractised laborers can be rendered effective at least in this important branch of industry.

We are aware that, in the greater number of trades, a laborer from the general population is not so speedily convertible to use as in collieries, and that, therefore, with even full security for the new workmen a time must elapse, and loss must be incurred, and a most inconvenient suspension of the manufacture must take place, ere it can

again be set a-going in the same effective way as before. The old workmen who have struck cannot all at once be replaced by the same number, and the new workmen who succeed them cannot all at once acquire the habit and skill of their predecessors. It is certainly relieving to observe how soon an ordinary laborer can be transformed into a good collier, and even made serviceable in many of the branches of cotton-spinning. Yet there can be no doubt that in all those crafts and occupations which require a long apprenticeship to be accomplished in their mysteries there might be a cessation of work which, if persisted in beyond a certain length, might be inconvenient to master manufacturers, and still more inconvenient to their customers. To look fairly and openly at all the possibilities, one can conceive a great extent of inconvenience from a universal strike of shipwrights, or house-carpenters, and still more, perhaps, of clothiers and shoemakers, all classes of workmen that cannot be so instantly replaced, as some others, out of the general population.

Now in the nature of the case itself, there is a sufficient protection even against this evil, alarming as it may appear, and that without any express interference of Parliament in the matter. We mean the certainty, that, sooner or later, the workmen who have struck must surrender themselves to terms of agreement with their employers. They cannot hold out against this self-inflicted blockade beyond a certain period. There must, of course, be a rapid expenditure of their means, and, if living without work, and therefore without wages, their resources must soon melt away. . . .

And what we hold to be of prime importance in this argument is that the result brought about in this natural way has a far more permanent and pacifying effect upon the workmen than when overborne out of their combination by the force of legal restraints and the terror of legal penalties. . . . They will be greatly more manageable after having themselves made full trial of their own impotency, than when festering under a sense of the injustice and hostility wherewith, under the old combination laws, they conceived that the hand of government was lifted up against the interests and natural rights of their order. It was quite to be expected that there should be frequent and even fierce outbreakings on their part, after the repeal of these laws, but, most assuredly, this general experience of the upshot will be of far more healing influence than anything so fitted to exasperate and tantalize, as the re-enactment of them. . . .

It is really not for the interest of the masters that there should be a revival of these laws. Greatly better for them, too, that there should have been a trial of strength, after which both parties are landed in that state of settlement and repose which comes after a battle that has been decisively terminated. . . .

CHAPTER XXI

THE SAME SUBJECT CONTINUED

It is competent for masters, too, to frame such articles of agreement with their workmen, as shall protect them in a great measure from any sudden or unlooked-for cessations; and for the violation of which these workmen shall bring down upon themselves not the arbitrary, but the rightful penalties of law, and which penalties, should it be found necessary, might be still further aggravated without any offence to the principles of an obvious or natural morality. They could engage their laborers for a service of months instead of weeks or days, and then put forth a most legitimate strength to compel their fulfilment of the stipulated period. To make the security more effectual they could hire their workmen in separate classes at all separate periods, so that, at worst, it could only be a partial, and never a universal strike at any one time. They could further ascertain beforehand, as in domestic service, whether any of them mean to leave their employment at the termination of their bargain; and thus masters, with time to look about for new workmen, could never be caught unprepared. . . . Masters and manufacturers can lay an assessment on the wages of the readmitted workmen, or, which is the same thing, can take

them in again upon reduced wages till they have recovered, by the difference, a complete indemnification for all that they have suffered by the interruption of the manufacture. . . .

At the very worst, and though masters should not be wholly able to protect themselves from inconvenience and loss by combination, this should just be regarded as one out of many other hazards to which their business is exposed. Manifold are the casualties to which they are subjected, whether from fire or shipwreck, or unlooked-for fluctuations in the state of the market. It is not more the part of Government to interfere for their defence against the uncertainties of the market for labor, than against the uncertainties of the market for those commodities in which they deal; against the fitful elements of discontent or cupidity in the minds of their workmen than against the fitful agitations of the weather or of the ocean. It is for them to lay their account with the chances and the changes in the price of labor as well as in the price, whether of their raw material or of their finished commodity, and just to charge or to calculate accordingly.

The master, in truth, is only the ostensible, or, at worst, the temporary sufferer by this conspiracy of his workmen; and if there be any sufferer at all in the long run it is not he, but the customer. He loses profit for a season, but it is all made up to him by the eventual rise of profit that ensues on the production of his commodity being suspended. This is the well-known effect of a general strike among operatives. It relieves the overladen market of the glut under which it labors, and, by the time that work-

men at length give in, the manufacturer enters upon what to him is the most enriching of all harvests, the harvest of a brisk demand upon empty warehouses. . . . Would they but withhold that perpetual interference by which they are ever cramping and constraining the liberty of things, they would find how much better the laws of nature, and the laws of political economy, provide for the great interests of human life when unchecked by the laws of Parliament.

[After a repetition of the argument that laws and combinations cannot affect prices of labor or profits; that natural economic laws will have their way in spite of artificial arrangements; that labor will be paid low wages if the number of laborers is too great for the demand; the author proceeds to show the laborers how, under natural laws, wages will rise if the supply of laborers is not excessive.]

And certain it is that this will avail them without the expedient of any organized association at all. For the sake of simplicity, let us confine the argument to any one branch of manufacture which we might suppose to be in the hands of a certain number of capitalists, and that it is somewhat straitened for a supply of laborers. In consequence, the commodity will be produced in somewhat less abundance than can fully meet the demand for it in the market, and its price inevitably rises. This increment of price, in the first instance, raises the profits of the masters, but its final landing-place is among the workmen, for, in the second instance, and without combinations, it will go to the raising of the wages. The rise of profits

in any trade tends both to create more of capital within the trade, and to allure to it more of capital from without. In other words, master manufacturers will not long be permitted to enjoy this additional profit; for out of it there will almost instantly emerge a busier competition, either among themselves, or from new adventurers, enticed to this more hopeful walk of speculation. The prosperity of any trade is ever followed up both with the means and the efforts to extend it; but this cannot be done without a call for more operatives than before. Each individual master, while the demand is brisker than the supply, and therefore profits encouraging, will try to widen and enlarge his own establishment, and, as the effect of this competition among all, a higher wage will be held out than before to laborers. Let there be an endeavor on the part of every capitalist to make out a full complement of workmen, and nothing more is necessary than a difficulty in doing so, from the smallness of the numbers to be had, in order to secure for those workmen a liberal remuneration. Apart from any association on the side of the operatives, their object is gained by a competition on the side of their masters. And all which they have to do is to cultivate, each in his own family, those habits of foresight and sobriety, without which it is utterly impossible, either by device or by violence, to save them from the miseries of an over-peopled land.

This of itself will elevate the condition of the working classes. Let there be somewhat more of virtue in their conduct, and somewhat more of prudence and delay in their marriages, and there will forthwith commence that

progress by which, silently and gradually and indefinitely, the price of their services must rise, and themselves must ascend to a higher status in the commonwealth. And all this without the turmoil and effervescence of combinations. These can never permanently raise the price of labor. There is one precise point at which this price settles, and this point is altogether determined by the proportion which obtains between the work to be done, and the number of workmen that are to be had for the doing of it. . . .

Everything in the state and history of the commercial world announces how little capitalists have it in their power to sustain an extravagant rate of profit, for any length of time, at the expense of their customers or of their workmen. It is a prevalent impression among workmen that they are too much at the mercy of capitalists. If they only knew the whole truth they would soon perceive that capitalists are wholly at the mercy of each other; and in such a way that without being able to help it they are very much at the mercy of their workmen. At least, if it be not so, it is altogether the fault of the workmen themselves, who, by the simple regulation of their numbers might, not in a way of turbulence, but in a way of order and peace, become the effectual dictators in every question between them and their employers.

These employers cannot, though they would, reserve in profit to themselves any part of that, which, in the state of the labor market, must go in wages to their laborers. They cannot keep up their profits beyond a certain rate at the expense of their workmen, and in the progress

of things, too, this rate is constantly falling. For how short a time can any lucrative branch of trade be upheld in its lucrativeness! In a few months the rush of capital fills it to an overflow. Let but a stage-coach upon any road, or a steamboat upon any river, have realized the smallest centage of excess above the ordinary profits of the country, and, in a moment, by other coaches and other boats, the excess, or perhaps the whole profit altogether is annihilated. The same holds true of every other department. Each is crowded with capital, and profit, all over the land, is rapidly verging to a minimum. This is satisfactorily demonstrated by the fall in the interest of money; and perhaps a still more striking exhibition of it is the way in which capital is going about among all the schemes and possibilities of investiture that are now afloat, and absolutely begging for employment. With such a creative and accumulating force in capital the laboring classes may be in perfect security, that any hostile combination of their masters against them must speedily be neutralized, by competition among themselves. . . .

And, for ourselves, we confess it to be a cheering anticipation, that the laboring classes shall, not by a midway passage of anarchy and misrule, but by a tranquil process of amelioration in their character and habits, make steady amelioration at the same time in their outward circumstances. We believe it to be in reserve for society, that, of the three component ingredients of value, the wages of labor shall at length rise to a permanently higher proportion than they now have, either to the profit of stock or the rent of land, and that thus, workmen will share

more equally than they do at present, with capitalists and proprietors of the soil, in the comforts and even the elegancies of life. But this will not be the achievement of desperadoes. It will be come at through a more peaceful medium, through the medium of a growing worth and growing intelligence among the people. It will bless and beautify that coming period, when a generation, humanized by letters, and elevated by the light of Christianity, shall, in virtue of a higher taste and a larger capacity than they now possess, cease to grovel as they do at present among the sensualities of a reckless dissipation.

This dissipation stands often associated with a stout and sullen defiance, and the two together characterize a large class of the mechanics of our present day. But these are not the men who are to accomplish the enlargement of that order to which they belong; at one time on the brink of starvation by their own extravagance, and then lying prostrate at the dictation of their employers; at another, in some season of fitful prosperity, made giddy with ambition, and breaking forth in the complaints and the clamors of an appetency which is never satisfied. It is not by such a process of starts and convulsions as this that our working classes are to be borne upward to that place of security and strength, which, nevertheless, we believe to be awaiting them. But there is no other foundation than that of their own sobriety and good principle on which it can solidly be reared. And the process in this way may easily be apprehended. In proportion as man becomes more reflective and virtuous, in that proportion does he seek something higher than the mere gratifica-

tions of his animal nature. His desires take a wider range, and he will not be satisfied but with a wider range of enjoyment. There is a growing demand for certain objects of taste and decency; and even the mind will come to require a leisure and a literature for the indulgence of its nobler appetites, now brought into play by means of a diffused education. Altogether, under such a regimen as this, the heart of a workman is made to aspire after greater things than before, and in perfect keeping and harmony with a soul now awakened to the charms of that philosophy which is brought down to his understanding in a mechanic school, is it that he should hold as indispensable to his comfort a better style of accommodations than his forefathers, whether in apparel, or furniture, or lodging. And it is just by means of a more elevated standard than before, that marriages become later and less frequent than before. . . . The man who counts it enough for himself and his family that they have rags, and potatoes, and a hovel, will rush more improvidently, and therefore more early, into the married state, than he who feels that, without a better provision and a better prospect than these, he should offend his own self-respect, and compromise all his notions of what is decent, or dignified, or desirable. . . .

If we except the state of still youthful colonies, we shall be sure to find that, corresponding to the difference in the average standard of enjoyment, is there a difference in the average period of marriage. The higher the one is the later the other is. . . .

In the act of dealing equally with the various classes

of society it is perhaps impossible to avoid saying what might occasionally be offensive to them all. And if, on the one hand, there are laborers who need to be rebuked out of their turbulence and unjust discontent, so, on the other hand, there are still a few of the British aristocracy who eye with jealousy and dread all the advances that are making by the people in knowledge, and even in the sufficiency and style of their enjoyments. More especially have recent outbreakings of workmen engendered in certain quarters a dislike of savings-banks, as the likely organs of building up a capital for the lower orders, as might be the instrument at length of a popular despotism, at once the most fearful in itself, and the most destructive of all the great political and economic interests in our land.

[The workmen who save a little property will not rashly rush into strikes under the lead of demagogues. Chalmers forgets that an associated fund is protected from hasty action by exactly the same motives, and that a strike which must be discussed in labor parliaments is the fruit of a mental process of reflection and consideration which has immense educative value.]

And there is a very substantial, and, at the same time, a very pure compensation, awaiting the higher classes of society, for this encroachment that is made upon them by the increased wages of the lower. It is founded upon this: the greater amount and value of the services that will then be rendered. . . . There are a power and a charm in a certain generous style of remuneration, the

whole benefit of which will come to be realized in that better state of things to which we believe that society is fast tending. We are aware of the union which often obtains in large manufacturing establishments, between the enormous wage, and the reckless, loathsome dissipation of its workmen. But, ere the higher wage that we contemplate shall obtain throughout the country at large, this recklessness must have very generally disappeared, and a sober, reflective, and well-principled character substituted in its place. . . .

The same lesson is afforded by the reverse experience of those farmers who employ a set of worthless, degraded, and half-paid paupers, in the business of their agriculture. They are far more unprofitable as workmen than the regular servants who obtain a full and respectable allowance.

CHAPTER XXII

ON CERTAIN PREVALENT ERRORS AND MISCONCEPTIONS WHICH ARE FOSTERED BY ECONOMIC THEORIES, AND WHICH ARE FITTED TO MISLEAD THE LEGISLATURE IN REGARD TO LABOR AND THE LABORING CLASSES

[THE author asserts that the obstacles to reform are found in the prejudices of the rich and educated classes as truly as in the minds of the laborers. Many merchants and manufacturers lose sight of the end of business, and consider the means as vital. The end of all production is consumption. Trade and manufactures have all their worth and significancy as subservient to, and none whatever apart from, the enjoyment of consumers. Adherents of the fast-disappearing mercantile system seem to think that the stoppage of commerce or factories is the evil, whereas the real evil lies in the rise in price of food and coal, necessaries of life for the people. The real good of shawls lies in the wearing of them, not in the weaving of them. The factory or the ship is not an end but a means to the production of commodities which satisfy wants. If trade is left free the people will purchase out of their possessions what they desire to enjoy. Consumers thus determine the direction of employment. It will not be necessary for the government to punish laborers for combining; if left to themselves they will work or starve, and in addition to fear of hunger no other compulsion is needed.

If the articles manufactured are luxuries the consumer

can reduce the price merely by abstaining from their use until the price has fallen. This is largely true even of more necessary commodities, as shoes. Even here the consumers may compel the producers to be reasonable in price by doing without until the goods are within their reach. Chalmers is arguing here against legal suppression of trade-unions, and his argument is based on the idea that workmen can be brought to terms by consumers in another way and without violence or police force, merely by refusing to buy their products until the price is reasonable. A combination of farmers is next to impossible, and it is they who produce the most necessary articles.]

We have just as little to apprehend for the destruction of a nation's capital from these combinations as for the ultimate disappearance or diminution of a nation's industry. The one delusive fear, however, is fully as inveterate as the other, and, accordingly, in the report by the Select Committee on the Combination Laws we find a strongly expressed alarm lest "capital be withdrawn or transported;" and so, lest "the source of every branch of our industry should gradually be cut off, and the whole laboring population of the country consigned to the distress and misery, which it is the tendency of the ill-advised combinations, in which so great a portion of it is implicated, rapidly and inevitably to produce."

This introduction of capital into the argument suggests a new topic of alarm. It serves to complicate, and so to cast an obscurity over the whole subject. We know how closely associated fear is with indistinct vision; and in as far as the import and the precise function of capital are dimly apprehended, in so far is the mind liable to

dread and to disturbance from the imagination of any hazard to which it may be exposed.

[The wasted capital, from whatever cause the waste occurs, is soon replaced at a temporary inconvenience of wage earners and the consuming public.

It is possible to imagine such a total destruction of capital that the population would perish. But, practically, modern peoples are not alarmed at this prospect. After the death of a large number of people by war or pestilence the number speedily rises from increase of births. So the destruction of wealth is rapidly followed by augmented production, and soon capital is so plentiful as to go begging for investment. We do not think it necessary to offer premiums for large families, as was once thought desirable; the fear is rather that numbers will grow too rapidly. And capital will grow, under natural conditions, without legislation and simply by the action of natural desires working in freedom. "Capital does not suffer, though there are many spendthrifts; just as the population does not suffer in extent, though there are many old bachelors."]

So that capital, like population, is one of those self-regulating interests, the care of which does not properly belong to the legislature. The fear lest it should depart from our kingdom by successive removals is altogether chimerical. The very first portion that went abroad, if only large enough for the effect, would cause a larger profit at home, which should act first by a detaining power on the capital that was left behind, and then, by an extending power, again to fill up the vacancy. It is not for government to concern itself about an interest which the

laws of political economy have abundantly provided for. There may be a call upon its justice when the rights of any one order of men are encroached upon by the aggression of another, but let not this be complicated with other objects, as on the occasion before us; nor let it imagine any call upon its wisdom or its authority for the protection of an economic interest that is abundantly safe without its interference.

The intimidation of new or strange workmen by others, who, either by wealth, or by numbers, are more powerful than themselves, is not to be borne with, and no expense, whether of agency or treasure, should be spared to put it down. We should rather that half the British navy were put into requisition to insure the manning of our merchant vessels by the sailors who would, than that any obstruction should remain impracticable, which may have been thrown in their way by the sailors who would not. At a hundredth part, we believe, of this exertion, all that is needed or that is desirable in this way could be accomplished. But still, while the fermentation lasts, and ere that full experience, so tranquillizing to workmen themselves, is not yet completed, it should be the distinct object of our nation's policy and of our nation's police to protect the independence of all persecuted workmen. And, for such an object, we are sure that the voice of the nation would go most thoroughly along with it. Connected with a purpose like this, a strong executive would be hailed by all the true patriots of our land; employed, as it would be, not in fastening the chains of a universal oppression, but in unlocking those chains, and so acting

as the guarantee and the guardian of a universal liberty. It seems an axiom in the rights of men that none shall be forced to work who is unwilling. But surely it is an axiom as indisputable that all shall be suffered to work who are willing. The line of equity between them is on the one hand, to permit the combination, and, on the other, to protect all who do not belong to them from the terror and the tyranny of combinations. So long as they are not permitted, the popular mind will continue to fester under a sense of provocation, that will have much of the semblance and somewhat, perhaps, of the reality of justice in it. And this will be further influenced by the imaginary virtue which they will still ascribe to an expedient not yet fully tried, and from which they will conceive themselves to be debarred by the hand of arbitrary power. But, with the permission to them, and the protection to all others, not one shadow of complaint will be left to them. They will have leave to try their own boasted expedient, and it will be a pacific experience, both to the country and to themselves: for sooner far than our fears will allow us to think, they will make full proof of its impotency. We feel persuaded that, in a few months, this feverishness would subside, and at length give way to the sound and the settled conviction, that, after all, by the turbulence of their politics and associated plans, nothing is to be gained. And so we should look for a tranquillity more solid than our land has ever yet enjoyed, as the precious fruit of that temperate, yet firm legislation, which can at once be tolerant of combinations, yet most sternly intolerant of crimes.

CHAPTER XXIII

ON THE EFFECT WHICH THE HIGH PRICE OF LABOR IN A COUNTRY HAS UPON ITS FOREIGN TRADE

THERE can be no doubt of that impartial spirit which so honorably signalizes the rulers of our country, and in virtue of which they have the unquestionable inclination to deal fairly and equally with all. We do not think that the most enthusiastic friends of the lower orders can reproach our Government with an undue bias to the other classes of society, or, if ever, in arbitrating between them, there is a seeming preference of masters to servants, that they have been led to it, either by a partiality of affection toward the rich, or by any lordly indifference to the rights and interests of the poor. There is a principle of even-handed justice which runs throughout nearly all the public administrations of our land, and when at any time bewildered from this rectilinear path, it is, generally speaking, not a favoritism toward one order of the community, but a false imagination of what is best for the interests of all the orders that leads them astray. In other words, theirs is an honest, though at times a mistaken legislation, and to this naught has contributed more than a dim-sighted political economy, a science through the opacities of which, when Parliament does attempt to

flounder, it is almost purely and uprightly for the best. . . . We think that there are certain economic dogmata which do sway our politicians against the cause and interest of the working classes, and which dispose them to look adversely and fearfully to that higher status toward which a virtuous and intelligent peasantry must at length make their way.

This proceeds from the association, in their minds, between a rise in the price of British labor, and a proportional fall in the extent and prosperity of British commerce. It will bring down, it is thought, our ascendency in foreign markets; and the introduction of this new element, like the problem of the three bodies in physics, has thickened the perplexities of the whole speculation. Its general effect is to give a hostile feeling toward a liberal remuneration for the industry of workmen at home, lest this should proceed so far as to limit, and perhaps destroy, our merchandise abroad, and so bereave our nation of the gains of that merchandise. It is thus conceived that the avenues may be closed of that trade which binds us to the surrounding world, and by which the whole world, it is thought, becomes tributary to the wealth and importance of our empire. The price of labor forms one main ingredient of the price of every commodity which labor is brought up into. Should this price then become too high at home the price of its produce may become too high for being disposed of abroad. . . .

[Here follows the author's theory of foreign trade. The only inconvenience from the loss of foreign trade,

in wine, for example, would be that the consumers of that article would have to do without it and substitute some other means of enjoyment in its place. Capital and labor would, with some temporary loss, find occupation and produce commodities to support the population, even if all foreign trade were lost. The conclusion is:]

There is no country whose clear and substantial interests would be less endangered by a high standard of enjoyment among our workmen, and a consequent high remuneration for their work, than those of Great Britain. Such are her natural advantages, that even with a great comparative dearness of labor, she could maintain that superiority, or rather that equality in foreign markets, which is really all that is desirable. So that without let or hinderance from any apprehension in this quarter, she may give herself indefinitely up to the pure and patriotic task of raising the condition by raising the character of her peasantry.

We are abundantly sensible that the argument of this chapter is altogether superfluous to those who, with Ricardo and his followers, maintain the doctrine that profits fall just to the extent that wages rise. It were out of place to offer here any estimate of this doctrine, nor is it necessary for any present or practical object of ours, seeing that the economists of this school can have no such alarm as it is the purpose of our foregoing observations to dissipate. They, on the contrary, must regard the high price of British labor as forming, not a prohibition, but a passport for British commodities into foreign markets. The truth is that, according to this view, any rise in the

element of labor must be more than compensated from the element of a reduced profit, for this last will tell on each successive transfer of the commodity from one dealer to another; so that, on the last sale which it undergoes in the market, it will turn out to be all the cheaper for the work of preparing it, having become dearer than before. . . . In their apprehension a liberal remuneration for the work of British hands must extend the sale of British manufactures. We can scarcely persuade ourselves of such a result, and we count it enough of vindication for the cause, that, with a far more liberal remuneration than laborers at present enjoy, there might still be such an export of manufactures as would save the exportation of food, and so maintain the entireness of our natural population.

CHAPTER XXIV

ON MECHANIC SCHOOLS, AND ON POLITICAL ECONOMY AS A BRANCH OF POPULAR EDUCATION

THE mechanic schools which are now spreading so widely and so rapidly over the face of our land must be regarded as a mighty contribution to those other causes which are all working together for the elevation of the popular mind. But it should not be forgotten that the scientific education which they provide for those who choose it forms only one of these causes, and that ere we can prevail upon all, or even upon a majority in the working classes of society so to choose, there must have been anterior causes, both of a preparatory and of a pervading nature, in previous operation. We can scarcely expect any demand for a higher scholarship from those who have not been furnished, in some tolerable degree, with elementary learning, and we might further affirm, with all safety, that the most willing attendants on the ministrations of a Sabbath, are also the most willing attendants on the ministrations of a week-day, instructor. However little it may have been reflected upon, it is not the less true, that there obtains a very close affinity between a taste for science and a taste for sacredness. They are both of them refined abstractions from the grossness of

the familiar and ordinary world, and the mind which relishes either has achieved a certain victory of the spiritual or the intellectual over the animal part of our nature. The two resemble in this, that they make man a more reflective and a less sensual being than before, and, altogether, impress a higher cast of respectability on all his habits and on all his ways. It does occasionally happen, that, on entering the house of a mechanic, the eye is pleased with the agreeable spectacle of a well-stored bookcase. . . . It is generally the unfailing index of a well-conditioned family; and this, whether it be loaded with the puritanic theology of our forefathers, or with the popular science of the present day. Now, we are sure that this never can, from an occasional, become a common or a frequent exhibition, but by a progress through which our peasantry must ascend to a higher style of outward comfort as well as to a higher state of mental cultivation. We, therefore, hail the scientific education of the people as being a most powerful auxiliary toward a translation so desirable, and we are sure, on the other hand, that the cause of mechanic schools will be most powerfully aided by a greater efficiency being given, both to the methods of common and of Christian education, in parishes. How this can best be accomplished in cities of overgrown population we have already, with all amplitude, endeavored to explain, and we barely refer to former chapters of this work for our description of those processes by which we conceive that the lessons both of religion and of ordinary scholarship may most effectually be served out to plebeian families.

[It is not necessary that people should know the laws of economics in order to be induced to follow them. Education of any kind gives higher wants and desires, and this leads to reflection and forecasting, and thus to later marriages and smaller families, with relatively increased wages.]

This stands very palpably out in the custom, at one time nearly universal, of our Scottish peasantry, when, after the virtuous attachment had been formed, and the matrimonial promises had been exchanged, even years of delay were incurred, ere the matrimonial state was entered upon. These years formed an interval of economy and exertion with each of the parties, whose aim it was to provide respectably in furniture, and in all sorts of "plenishing" for their future household. Here the connection is quite distinct between a higher standard of enjoyment and a later period of marriages. And it was certainly then by another tuition than that of any economic theory that a habit in every way so wholesome found its establishment among our population. And the exposition of such a theory to the understanding of the people is just as little needed now for the purpose either of restoring or of raising this practical habit amongst them. The thing is brought about not by means of imparting a skill or an intelligence in political economy, but simply by those influences which give a higher tone to the character, and of which influences education may certainly be regarded as one of the most powerful. . . . Though in deference to a general, but ill-founded alarm, the education of workmen in political economy should be kept out

of these schools, another education can be devised which shall be fully as effectual for the accomplishment of the most desirable processes in political economy. They might be made to exemplify the principles in which they are not enlightened, and, without being taught the bearing which a higher taste and style of enjoyment have upon the circumstances of our peasantry, they can be led to imbibe this taste, and so to realize all its eventual benefits. For this purpose, it is not one, but many kinds of scholarship that are effectual. Whatever may stimulate the powers of the understanding, or may regale the appetite for speculation, by even that glimmering and imperfect light which is made to play, in a mechanic school, among the mysteries of nature; or may unveil, though but partially, the great characteristics of wisdom and goodness that lie so profusely scattered over the face of visible things, or may both exalt and give a wider compass to the imagination, or may awaken a sense that before was dormant to the beauties of the divine workmanship and to the charms of that argument, or of that eloquence, by which they are expounded—each and all of these might be pressed into the service of forming to ourselves a loftier population. Every hour that a workman can reclaim from the mere drudgeries of bone and muscle will send him back to his workshop and his home a more erect and high-minded individual than before. With his growing affinity to the upper classes of life in mental cultivation, there will spring up an affinity of taste and habit, and a growing desire of enlargement from those various necessities by which the

condition of a laborer may now be straitened and degraded. There will be an aspiration after greater things, and the more that he is fitted by education for intercourse with his superiors in rank, the more will he be assimilated to them in taste for the comforts and the decencies of life. In the very converse that he holds with the lecturer, who one day expounds to him the truths of science, and another day examines and takes account of his proficiency, there is a charm that not only helps to conciliate him to better society, but that also familiarizes him in some measure to the tone of it. This might only proceed a certain way; and yet, however little this way is, it must be obvious that such a man will not so aptly or so heedlessly rush into marriage, with no other prospect before him than a potato diet for his constant regimen, and one closely huddled apartment for his home. Now, this is all that we want to relieve the labor market of the glut which oppresses it, and so to secure a higher wage for our laborers. Toward this result the mechanic schools lend a most important contribution, and they will speed a most desirable process in political economy, even though they should never initiate so much as one disciple into the principles of the science.

Still, however, we hold it desirable that this science should be admitted, with others, into our schemes of popular education, and that for the purpose of averting the very mischief which many have dreaded, and which they apprehend still from the introduction of it. To this they have been led by the very title of our science, giving rise to a fancied alliance in their mind with politics, and in

virtue of which they would liken a lecturer upon this subject, in a school of arts, to a demagogue in the midst of his radical auditory. Now the truth is that the economical science which enables its disciples to assign the causes of wealth is as distinct from politics as is the arithmetical science which enables its disciples to compute the amount of it, and there is just as much reason to fear an approaching democracy because the people are now taught to calculate prices as there will be when people are taught soundly to estimate and to reason upon the fluctuation of prices. We do not happen to participate in the alarm of those who should, above all things, depreciate, from our mechanic institutions, what might strictly and properly be termed the science of politics, believing, as we do, that all truth is innocent, and that the greatest safety lies in its widest circulation. But we confess a more special affection for the truths and the doctrines of political economy, and, so far from dreading, do greatly desiderate the introduction of its lessons into all those seminaries which have been instituted for the behoof of our common people. It is utterly a mistake that it cannot be taught there without the hazard of exciting a dangerous fermentation. Instead of this, we are not aware of a likelier instrument than a judicious course of economical doctrine, for tranquillizing the popular mind, and removing from it all those delusions which are the main causes of popular disaffection and discontent. We are fully persuaded that the understanding of the leading principles of economical science is attainable by the great body of the people, and that when actually attained it

will prove not a stimulant, but a sedative to all sorts of turbulence and disorder; more particularly that it will soften and at length do away those unhappy and malignant prejudices which alienate from each other the various orders of the community, and spread abroad this salutary conviction that neither government, nor the higher classes of the state, have any share in those economical distresses to which every trading and manufacturing nation is exposed; but that, in fact, the high road to the secure and permanent prosperity of laborers is through the medium of their own sobriety and intelligence and virtue.

But, in confirmation of this our sentiment, we must go somewhat into detail, and, in so doing, shall have to describe the rapid sketch of what we deem to be a right course of popular economics.

It, in the first place, can be made abundantly obvious to the general understanding, that the price of an article has a certain and necessary dependence on the two elements of demand and supply.

[Here is a repetition of his former teachings: that if the supply of labor is small, in relation to demand for laborers, the price of wages will certainly rise; that the rise in the price of an article or service shows where that article or service is most needed by the community; that utmost freedom of competition will secure the interests of all classes.]

The exemplification of this last doctrine, in which the attendants of a mechanic school have the greatest interest, is that which regards the price of labor. It is not a tangi-

ble commodity, but liable to the same laws of variation in price with every other commodity which is brought to market, or which can be made in any way the subject of a bargain. It is exposed to the fluctuations of a greater or a less demand, and it might be furnished at a greater or less rate of supply. The laborers of our land are the sellers of this article, and it is virtually they who fix and determine the price of it. The buyers are those who employ them, and they are not to blame because of the miserable price which they give for labor, for this is the price at which the other party have offered it. The true cause, at any time, of a depression in the wages, or the price of labor, is not that masters have resolutely determined to give no more, but that servants have agreed to take so little. The infuriated operatives, instead of looking to capitalists as the cause of their distress, should look at one another. They would have greatly more reason, at a time of well-paid labor, to look to capitalists as the cause of their high wages, than to look to them as the cause of their low wages, at a time of ill-paid labor. In the one season it is the overbidding of each other for labor, by the masters, which is the efficient cause of its high prices. In the other season, it is the underselling of each other, by the laborers, which is the efficient cause of its low price. Whatever be the external complexion, this is the substantial character of these transactions, and this might easily be made to appear to the disciples of a popular economic course, among the foremost revelations of the science. It is a science through the arcana of which the ordinary attendants on a school of arts are abundantly

capable of being led, and we should confidently look for patience and peace and charity as the practical fruits of it. . . .

There could, after this, be explained the cause of those periodic depressions which take place in the wages of manufacturing labor, and the way of averting it—even by an accumulated capital in the hands of workmen. And, even although the economical lecturer could point out no remedy for this state of things, there would be a salutary and pacific influence in his demonstration of the causes which produced it. It is well when workmen are convinced that the low price of labor is not what they at first sight imagine, the doing of their proud oppressors, but the fruit of a necessity over which masters have no control. If wages were at the fiat of their employers why are they ever permitted to rise at all, and often to treble at one time their amount at another? But these tides of fluctuation, at one time adverse, and at another favorable for one or other of the parties, are set a-going by different forces altogether from the arbitrary will of capitalists, and it must serve to disarm the hostility of the humbler for the higher classes when they are made to understand that the ebbs and flows of a laborer's prosperity depend upon the laws of a mechanism for which their masters are as little responsible as they are for the laws of the planetary system.

But what should make an acquaintance with political economy so valuable to the working classes is that a remedy can be pointed out. The low price of labor is as much the doing of the laborers themselves as the low price of a

commodity is the doing of the dealers, who, in the case of an excessive supply, undersell each other. Their only relief is in the limitation of the supply, and there is positively no other permanent or effectual relief for the low wages of labor. All that combination can affect in this way is but partial and temporary, and it is only by lessening the proportion between the number of laborers and the demand for labor that the working classes will ever find themselves on a stable and secure vantage-ground. . . .

Now all this might be set forth with enough clear and commanding evidence for the understandings of the common people. With all the incredulity they feel about the philosophy of Malthus, they recognize the whole truth and application of it in particular trades, and when they combine, as they have often done, to limit and restrain the admission of apprentices into their own craft, they are just lending their testimony to the obnoxious theory of population. A smaller general population will supply fewer apprentices, and this favorite object of theirs, and which they have tried to effectuate by forcible exclusions, can be rightly arrived at in no other way than by that which the philosophy of Malthus has expounded. And here may be exposed with effect the odious and unjust character of many of their combinations—in that, by dictating the number of apprentices, they are acting in the unfair and illiberal spirit of monopoly. They are quite vehement against the alleged tyranny of masters, yet, in this instance, they may well be charged with having become the tyrants and the oppressors themselves. They would enact corporation laws in their own favor, and,

under the pretext of obtaining security against the aggression of their hostile employers, they would, in fact, by the restrictions which they propose upon the employment, commit an act of most glaring hostility against the families of all other workmen save their own. It is thus that each distinct trade would form itself into its own little oligarchy, and in no possible way could a system be devised more fatal to real liberty and more full of annoyance to the general population. We are confident that a lecturer of any talent at all might, upon this subject, carry the most crowded amphitheatre of plebeian scholars along with him. He might, in the first instance, gain their compliance with the whole of Smith's argument on the subject of free trade. He might enlist them on the side of competition, and make them partake in his own indignation against the hatefulness of monopoly. He might thus prepare his way for entering upon the subject of combinations, and, however fair and innocent he might allow them to be in themselves, yet, on the strength of the principles he had just expounded, he might feel himself on high vantage-ground for disarming them of all their evil, by denouncing whatever is wrong or mischievous in their practices. All the terror and outrage and forcible exclusion, which they have at any time directed, whether against new apprentices or workmen—the enormity of these he could make quite palpable to the popular understanding, and would, I am persuaded, be borne along on the tide of popular sympathy when, in the midst of his applauding hearers, he lifted, against dictation in all its forms, the honest remonstrances of justice and liberty,

and advocated the general rights of the population, whether against the now exploded oppressions of the statute-book, or the still sorer oppression of upstart and recently organized bodies among themselves. It is not through bearing down the passions by the force of law, but through forming and enlightening the principles of the commonalty by the force of instruction, that the present fermentations are to be allayed. And we despair not of the day when the science of political economy, instead of being dreaded as the instrument of a dangerous excitation, will be found, like all other truth, to be of powerful efficiency in stilling the violence of the people.

On this branch of the subject there is one invaluable result that might be obtained from the demonstrations of a lecturer, and that is a conviction, on the part of his hearers, that pauperism was, in truth, their worst enemy, though their enemy in disguise, and that it had a most depressing effect on the wages of labor and the comfort of the laborers.

After having discussed the causes which influence wages, the explanation of those causes which influence profits would lead to another and a most interesting branch of a popular course. And here it must be obvious how easy it were, on the strength of a few plain and intelligible simplicities, to infuse, even into the hearts of workmen, a spirit of candor and of conciliation toward their employers. More particularly could they be made to apprehend how impossible it is, in a state of freedom, for profits to subsist, during any length of time, at a higher rate than they ought to do. When profits are high, capital accumu-

lates, and when capital is accumulated, profits fall. Again, when, in virtue of some accidental influence, profits are very unequal, so as to be unreasonably high in one trade, there is, in a state of liberty, a rush of capital from all other trades, so as to bring all down to a general level. In this increase of capital, and competition of capitalists, laborers will at length be made to perceive that their security lies, and that, if they so far respect themselves, as that their high standard of enjoyment shall have the influence already explained, in restraining the increase of population, a high wage for work will be the inevitable consequence, and such a wage as is alike independent, either of illegal enactments or of illegal combinations. It would have been greatly more gratifying to us had the legislature not felt it necessary to assume even the semblance of hostility to the working classes. Certain it is that no real hostility is felt, and that, even if it were, it would be wholly ineffectual. It could not depress the wages of labor a single farthing beneath the rate at which it would have settled, in virtue of those economic laws over which the government of a country has no control. . . .

It is thus that without any effort, certainly without any combined effort, and without even their looking for it, there may, purely by a change of general habit, on the part of our workmen, be a gradual but sure elevation in the price of their labor. Capitalists cannot, though they would, long realize an extravagant profit at the expense of wages. The same competition among laborers which brings down wages operates also among capitalists to bring down profits. What laborers have to do is to slacken the

former competition by keeping down the supply of laborers, and leave the latter competition to operate. Let them but restrain the increase of population, and then make their harvest of the increase of capital. Masters, however willing, have it not in their power to realize, for any time, an excess of profits to the prejudice of the servants; for excess of profits gives rise to the exuberance of capital, and so to a keener competition for more laborers. Other capitalists will plant themselves in their neighborhood, and, either by outbidding, wrest from them their workmen, or force them to give a higher wage than before. There is no organization of laborers required to bring about this result—nothing, in fact, but that higher style of comfort and decency, which it is the effect both of Christian and common education to spread over the land. The foolish but impotent outbreakings of the last year will end in no permanent result whatever. A busy process of moral and mental culture would, in a very few years, tell, and permanently tell, on the condition of our general peasantry. The market is overstocked with capital. Let not the advantages of this to the working classes be neutralized by the market being also overstocked with labor. Then, instead of men seeking after masters, we shall have masters seeking after men. Instead of workmen underselling their labor, we shall have capitalists overbidding for it. For this blissful consummation workmen do not need to step abroad and form themselves into grotesque committees, and frame laborious articles, and make their cunning inventions of sign and countersign. They will gain nothing by all this so long as they suffer them-

selves to be oppressed by the weight of their own numbers. . . .

This [gain of workmen by restricting supply] we should rejoice in as a consummation devoutly to be wished. It were a great economic revolution brought about by the peaceful operation of moral instruments. Laborers would share more equally with landholders and traders than before, insomuch as wages would bear a higher proportion both to rent and profit. The social fabric would still have its orders and its gradations and its blazing pinnacles. But it would present a more elevated basis. At least, the ground-floor would be higher, while, in the augmented worth and respectability of the people, it would have a far deeper and surer foundation.

One great object of a wisely conducted economic school, whose presiding spirit would be that of loyalty to the state and love to the population, were to labor well the proposition, that it is not in the power of master manufacturers to realize, for any length of time, any undue advantage over their workmen. And here it might be well to expound the relation which there is between the profit of capital and the interest of money, after which the fall of interest might be alleged as affording patent exhibition of the universal decline that has taken place in profits. This would lead to some other cause for any depression in the wages of operatives than the extravagant gains of their employers, and would enable even the homeliest of the disciples to perceive that they are deprived of the advantage which they might have gotten from the competition of a now greatly increased capital, just be-

cause it was outdone by the stronger competition of a still more greatly increased population. In other words, that it was an advantage of which the population had deprived themselves. At all events the capitalists are quite innocent. They cannot help themselves as the laborers can. It is well for the spread of peace and charity among the working classes that they should be delivered from the false imagination that their masters are their oppressors. And it is further well for the spread among them of virtuous, temperate, and elevated habits, that they should be thoroughly possessed with the true doctrine of wages, that they are themselves their own deadliest oppressors, and that without the co-operation of their own moral endeavors, no benevolence on the part of the affluent, and no paternal kindness or care on the part of their rulers can raise them from the degradation into which a reckless or unprincipled peasantry shall have fallen.

It is needless, at present, to inquire how much farther mechanics could be raised in the scale of doctrine and information, on the subject of economical science. This would better be ascertained afterward. But we are thoroughly persuaded that these few elementary truths, along with their obvious and popular applications which we have now specified, could not only be received by the popular understanding, but would go far to dissipate all those crudities of imagination which excite the fiercest passions of the vulgar, and are, in fact, the chief elements of every popular effervescence. To make the multitude rational we have only to treat them as if they were fit subjects for being discoursed with rationally. Now this,

in reference to the great topics of misunderstanding between them and their employers, has scarcely ever yet been done, and the experiment remains to be made, of holding conference with the people on the great principles of that economic relation in which they stand to the other orders of society. We anticipate nothing from such a process but a milder and more manageable community, and feel confident that the frankest explanations of the mechanic teacher would be received by his scholars in the spirit of kindness. He may be in no dread of the utmost explicitness, or lest those truths, which bear severely either upon the sordidness or the violence of the people, should fall unwelcomely upon their ears. They will bear to be told both of the worthlessness of pauperism, and the gross injustice of those workmen who would infringe on the liberty of their fellows. Even those truths which go to vindicate their masters, and which look hardly or reproachfully upon the operatives, ought in no way to be withheld from them.

We affirm that reason will make anything palatable to the lower orders; and, if only permitted to lift her voice in some cool place, as in the classroom of a school of arts, she will attain as firm authority over the popular mind as she wields now within the walls of Parliament. And political economy, the introduction of which into our popular courses has been so much deprecated, will be found to have pre-eminence over the other sciences in acting as a sedative, and not as a stimulant, to all sorts of turbulence and disorder. It will afford another example of the affinity which subsists between the cause of popular

education and that of public tranquillity. Of all the branches of that education there is none which will contribute more to the quiescence of the multitude than the one for whose admittance into our mechanic schools we are now pleading. They will learn from it what be the difficulties by which the condition of the working classes is straitened, and how impossible it is to obtain enlargement therefrom while they labor under a redundancy of numbers. It will at least help to appease their discontent when given to understand that with this redundancy, any solid or stable amelioration of their circumstances is impracticable; and that without this redundancy the amelioration would follow of itself, and that to bring this about, the countenance of legislators, and the combination of laborers, were alike unnecessary. The lessons of such an institution would be all on the side of sobriety and good order. They would at length see that for the sufficiency of their own state, themselves were alone responsible, and, after bidding adieu to all their restlessness, they would be finally shut up to that way of peace and of prudence, by which, and by no other, they can reach a secure independence.

FINIS





